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**LECTURES**

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UPON THE



**BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN THE PENINSULA,**

**1808-14;**

**INTRODUCTORY TO THE STUDY OF MILITARY  
HISTORY.**



BY

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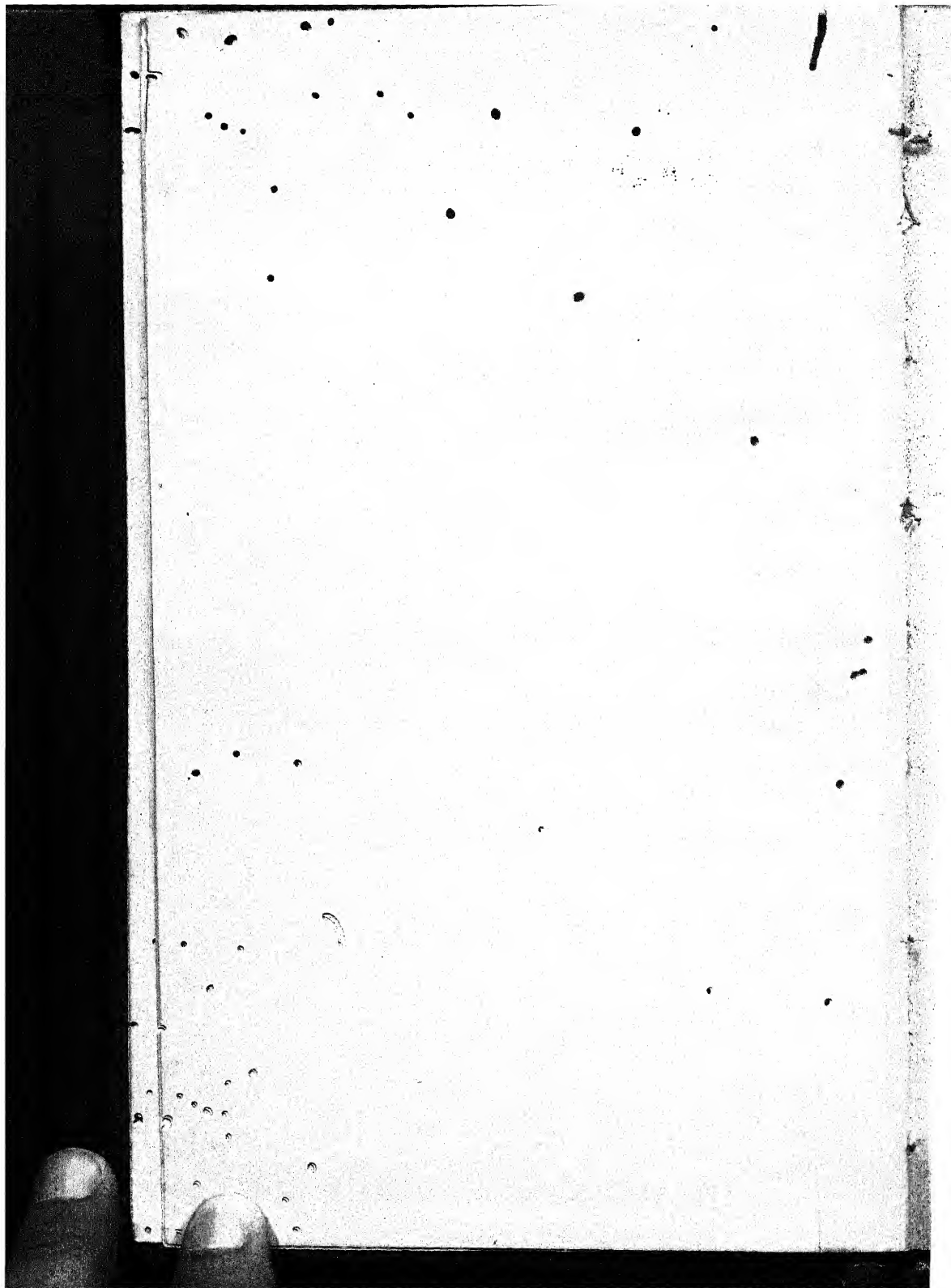
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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE following lectures were, with the exception of some slight additions since made to them, originally delivered to the Gentlemen Cadets of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst; and were written with the object of endeavouring to illustrate the broader principles which govern the movements of armies by the close consideration of some British campaigns: campaigns which, it is believed, form for English students the best introduction to the study of military history. A request for their publication constitutes the ground for their appearance in this form.

In compiling them it was the writer's aim,—

- 1st. To give an outline of the principal events of the Peninsula war, in which the British army took part, from the time of the first landing of that army upon the coast of Portugal, up to the conclusion of peace—(i.e. from 1808 to 1814)—an outline, which by bringing the chief features of the campaigns prominently before the mind, may be of assistance when in the future large and detailed accounts (such as that of Napier, or those given in the memoirs of the various French marshals) of this great war may be read.
- 2nd. To endeavour to make it clear, by fully commenting\*

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\* The foundation for the comments are the Wellington despatches and correspondence; Napier, Sir J. Jones, and other English—and also French—histories; and works of acknowledged value, especially Hamley's "Operations of War." All speculative, and indeed all original criticism, except of a very simple character, being intentionally avoided.

upon the various movements, that for a soldier to read military history with benefit, it is not sufficient to simply peruse it as a tale, and follow the story upon any ordinary atlas; but that the topography of the Theatre of War must be carefully studied upon the best procurable maps; that the reasons for every movement undertaken, for every plan followed, must be thought over, examined, and weighed; and the causes of success or failure in the execution of the steps and plans fully considered.

In the despatches and correspondence of the various leaders on both sides, and in standard military histories, full information upon which each individual can base as sound a judgment as his own intellect will allow him, is usually to be found, and they should be read with the object of forming such a judgment—a very different one from what is usually implied by mere “criticism.”

3rd. To explain, wherever the campaigns illustrate them, some of the ordinary technical terms and chief rules or maxims of the Art of War, but clothing these latter in as simple language as possible.

Any short outline of the main British operations in this war as a whole, combined with military comments, hardly exists. In the larger histories they are necessarily so mixed up with minor movements or with unimportant Spanish ones, that the student, unless a very earnest one, often puts them aside wearied, and in the shorter and more popular accounts any military criticism is as a rule wanting.

The Lectures (though not keeping rigidly to any exact limit), are more especially in illustration of “*Strategy*,” or the art of moving troops to advantage when not in the immediate presence of an enemy, in contradistinction to “*Tactics*,” or

the art of handling them in battle; and therefore the details of battles are not given, the object with which they were fought, and their result upon the campaign, being alone entered into.

When originally delivered, the lectures had been preceded by a few preliminary ones upon the organization of modern armies into brigades, divisions, corps d'armée, &c., the method and difficulty of supplying and moving troops, and the reasons why the preservation of "bases" and the roads leading from them was a matter so important to an army; and though it is not necessary to give these here, it is convenient to insert the few following introductory pages,\* as they explain some points, and simple technical expressions, treated in the lectures as understood:—

LARGE ARMIES NOW USED IN WAR. IMPORTANCE OF  
KEEPING THEM ASSEMBLED. NECESSITY OF DEPÔTS AND  
MAGAZINES—OF GOOD ROADS—OF GUARDING THOSE ROADS.

The simple fact that of two armies equally matched in every respect but that of numbers, the larger has clearly the advantage, naturally causes nations, when about to go to war, to raise as many soldiers as their resources will admit of; and in modern times powerful and wealthy nations have brought into the field enormous masses of men. But it is not sufficient to merely possess a large army; unless it can be *kept assembled*, and, when assembled, can be rapidly set in motion, and completely controlled, it is comparatively useless for warlike purposes.

The power of immediate motion, at the will of the commander, is an essential to an army, for, if there be two

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\* In the compilation of these, Hamley's "Operations of War" has been freely consulted.

contending forces, one of which can be moved upon an instant's notice, while the other cannot stir without much preparation, the former can evidently out-manceuvre the latter and place it at a disadvantage.

Thus any cause which interferes with the power of motion (or "*mobility*") of an army, is vitally detrimental to the army, and must be guarded against. Now such a cause would be the absolute dependence for food upon the immediate country in which the troops might happen to be placed. It can be easily seen that the resources of any small district, in which, for purposes of war, a force of 50,000 or perhaps 100,000 men may be concentrated, must be often totally inadequate to supply, for any time, the required amount of sustenance. This will frequently be the case in a fertile and friendly district; in a barren or a hostile one, in which the crops have been destroyed or removed, it will certainly be so. An army thus dependent must either starve or disperse in search of food.

If it be thus dispersed its power of instant motion is gone. It must be collected together again before it can stir as a compact body; and if it has been dispersed in the neighbourhood of a well-organized enemy who can move in masses, its scattered portions are in danger of being beaten while isolated. For these reasons it is essential that the men of an army should not be left dependent for food upon the particular district or country wherein they are waging war. The nation which sends them out to fight her battles, must herself forward it to them. The commander of the army will, of course, economise his resources by procuring food when practicable from his immediate neighbourhood; but he should have some more certain source of supply to fall back upon, if that fails.

These remarks, as to the necessity of sending forth food

for men, apply with almost equal force to that of sending forage for horses and baggage animals. If they are not constantly fed the cavalry must cease to exist, and the guns and baggage could not be moved. An army too must be at all times ready to fight as well as move. Directly it runs short of ammunition it becomes paralysed, and all power has gone from it. A constant stream of recruits also must be always on the road to join it, to supply the gaps in the ranks caused by battle and sickness. On account of considerations such as these, directly an army takes the field one of the first proceedings is to establish

### *Depôts and Magazines*

in which, subsequently, recruits on the way to it may find shelter, and stores of all kinds be accumulated and preserved.

These must be safe from the attack of the enemy, by natural position, if possible; but when that is impossible, must be fortified. They should, in fact, form a secure starting point for the army, and must, for the sake of convenience, be as near as security will allow to the country in which the army is about to operate—*i. e.*, to what is called technically, the "Theatre of War."

These places from which an army draws its resources, and from which it advances to make war, are called the "*Base*" of that army—because they *form the foundation upon which it stands.*

After the army begins to move, and as it advances further and further from these original depôts and magazines, supplies must be brought nearer to it, and therefore other magazines closer in rear are formed, and thus, as an army keeps advancing, its supplies always follow it at a convenient distance. To keep up such a stream of supplies, however, would not be possible for any time without the existence of



*Good Roads*

between the army and its magazines. Heavy stores can only be forwarded with certainty and regularity upon such roads. In bad weather, after much rain, roads, usually good, often become difficult, even for light carriages, and would be impassable for the heavy artillery and ammunition waggons and ponderous trains which accompany an army. The army itself must also have good roads along which to march, otherwise no combined movement of the three arms could be made with any certainty, for artillery and even cavalry cannot move along the miry lanes, or across the fields which, perhaps, infantry might traverse.

We see, therefore, the importance of possessing a good road or line by which to communicate with the magazines—called in technical language the "*Line of communication with the base*;" and also a good road or line along which to move forward or operate, called the "*Line*—or (if there are two or more roads) lines—*of operation*." Without these the arrival of supplies must be uncertain, and the army cannot march freely.

From what has been said as to the necessity to the efficiency of an army of a constant stream of supplies of all kinds, and of fresh men to fill up the losses caused by war, the importance of guarding the roads by which these must arrive—in the lines of communication—becomes at once apparent. Hence it is that, in war, a general who can place himself upon the road or roads by which an enemy's supplies are forwarded, has obtained a most important advantage, and provided he be strong enough *to maintain the position which he has gained*, perhaps a decisive one; for unless his adversary can regain his line of supplies by beating him in battle, or has a second set of magazines in some other direction to fall back upon he must soon become distressed for want of food, or (if pressed by him) short of ammunition, and will, under



the most favourable circumstances, be placed in a very dangerous position, and run the risk of losing a quantity of valuable stores.

Therefore, in war, an army—both while marching and fighting—endeavours *to guard its communications with its magazines or base ; and when it sees an opportunity, will try to threaten those of the enemy.*

Before closing this subject, it may be well to say that the above are only simple rules of war laid down by all the great captains of modern times ; and that though armies have occasionally marched to victory in spite of bad roads ; and, when cut off from their supplies, have defeated the enemy in battle, and won campaigns ; that this merely proves what English soldiers do not require to be reminded of, viz., that pluck and energy will conquer very great difficulties. It does not excuse the placing an army, through ignorance, where the chances are against it.

“Every general,” said Napoleon, “who loses his line of communication, is, according to the laws of war, worthy of death.”—*Maximes de Guerre de Napoleon.*

## ERRATA.

Page 132, line 4, for "present" read "fewest."

„ 172, line 2, for "as" read "thus."

„ 172, line 14, erase the words "in order to avoid such dispersion."

„ 203, line 4, after the words "Gave de Pau," insert "behind which Soult was drawn up."

## LECTURE I.

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### ORIGIN OF THE PENINSULA WAR.

In the year 1807, the power of Napoleon I., <sup>Power of</sup> Emperor of the French, was at its height. In a <sup>Napoleon.</sup> series of successful campaigns he had gained brilliant victories over Austria, Prussia, and Russia, and the whole continent of Europe stood in terror of his military genius, and of the immense armies which he led.

At this time England was the only powerful enemy actively opposed to him. Her navy, under Nelson, had two years previously almost completely destroyed the French fleet at Trafalgar; and Napoleon, without a fleet, being powerless to invade the country, had formed the design of subjugating it by ruining its commerce. To this end he bound the nations of the continent, upon pain of his serious displeasure, to <sup>His hos-</sup> close their ports against British vessels, and <sup>tility</sup> <sup>towards</sup> <sup>England.</sup> prohibited all commerce and communication with England.\* The European powers stood in too great

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\* Berlin Decree, November 21st, 1806.

Distrust of  
Spain and  
Portugal.

fear of Napoleon to openly oppose his wishes; but Portugal—a kingdom well inclined towards England, and which carried on with her a very profitable trade—did not discontinue her intercourse with sufficient promptitude to satisfy the French Emperor.

Uneasiness  
regarding a  
possible  
attack on  
France.

About the same time also, from good information afforded to him, Napoleon began to suspect that Spain, though an ally of France, was not a sincere and true one. Towards these two countries then—forming together what is termed the Spanish Peninsula,—he felt much ill-will, and their suspected hostility towards himself began, for a military reason, to render him uneasy.

By referring to an atlas, it can be seen that the Spanish Peninsula joins on to France. The French Emperor therefore considered, that if, when engaged in some war to the eastward of France, Spain and Portugal were to side against him, and to unite with his great enemy England, he might be placed in an embarrassing position. Having comparatively no navy, he could not attempt to prevent a British army from being landed upon any part of Portugal or Spain, and this army, once landed, could unite with Spanish and Portuguese troops, and marching in combination with them, attack France from the south.

Determines  
to possess  
himself of  
the Penin-  
sula.

These considerations, joined to the ambition of his nature, determined Napoleon to attempt the possession of the Peninsula; and to gain his object he entered upon a course of treachery which circumstances peculiarly favoured. Spain was at the time governed by Charles IV., an old and weak-minded king, the

tool of an unscrupulous minister named Godoy, and upon openly bad terms with his own son, Ferdinand VII., and the country was much distracted by the quarrels continually going on between the party of the King and Godoy, and the party of Ferdinand. Having succeeded in bribing Godoy, Napoleon, through his influence, persuaded the king to enter upon a secret treaty with him.\* By this treaty, which was one of the blackest treachery towards Portugal (and for being parties to which the King and Godoy fully deserved their subsequent punishment), a French army was to be permitted to enter Spain; Spanish troops were to join it, and the combined armies were to seize upon Portugal, it being a condition that that kingdom should be subsequently partitioned between Spain and France, and that Godoy should have a principality in it. A pretext for an advance into Portugal had next to be found, and was found as follows. Napoleon demanded from her (as proofs of her friendship), a declaration of war against England, the confiscation of all British merchandise, and the arrest of British subjects. Portugal, through fear, did not positively refuse these proofs, but she allowed herself to venture a remonstrance, and upon this simple remonstrance a French army was at once moved forward. The general who led it (Junot) was instructed to say that he came in no hostile spirit towards the Portuguese themselves, but was merely determined to carry out Napoleon's orders that the British should be at once excluded from the country. Uncertain as to the real intentions of Napoleon, and dreading his power,

Pretext for  
the occupa-  
tion of  
Portugal.

Occupation  
of Portugal.

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\* Treaty of Fontainebleau, Oct. 27th, 1807.

Portugal made no resistance, and the French quietly occupied Lisbon. The Spaniards soon entered and took possession of other parts of the country, and then the Portuguese army was partly disbanded and partly sent to France, and the subjugation of Portugal became complete.

But the turn of Spain was only deferred. Napoleon having got one army into the Peninsula, obtained permission, upon the ground (which appeared natural enough) of supporting it, to move up another to the Spanish frontier at Bayonne.

Pretext for  
the occupa-  
tion of  
Spain.

The quarrels at the court of Spain, between Charles and his son, and some tumults at Madrid, soon afforded him an excuse for interfering as a friend to restore tranquillity, and for bringing this second army into Spain; and the weak-minded king was persuaded at his suggestion to send the flower of the Spanish army out of the country upon a distant expedition. Madrid being thus peaceably occupied, more soldiers were poured in from France; the great frontier fortresses of St. Sebastian, Pampeluna, Barcelona, and Figueras, were quietly and skilfully surprised. Junot, who had received secret orders, disarmed by a stratagem that part of the Spanish Army in Portugal, and thus Spain lay at the mercy of Napoleon.

Occupation  
of Spain.

He now threw off all disguise, compelled the royal family to abdicate, and placed his brother Joseph upon the Spanish throne. In this way did the capital cities of both Spain and Portugal, and the principal strongholds of the whole Peninsula, fall without the slightest struggle, and without the



exchange of one single shot, into the hands of France.

The people of the conquered kingdoms, at first stupefied, soon turned furiously upon the French. Bloody insurrections broke out, and an appeal for assistance was made to England. She, at that time ever ready to resist Napoleon, freely granted it; large supplies of arms and money were at once forwarded, and it was determined to send a British army into the Peninsula.

Insurrec-  
tion of the  
people, and  
appeal to  
England.

#### SELECTION OF A STARTING POINT.

The events which we have narrated above, were extended over several months, and it was not until July, 1808, that the army set sail for the Peninsula. In the first instance, the government directed it upon Lisbon and Cadiz. The question now arises of "*why* were these points, in preference to the many others upon the coasts of Spain or Portugal, selected as those to be first occupied?" To answer this question demands a knowledge, 1st.—of the general military strength of the contending powers, and particularly of the positions held at this time, *i.e.*, at the time of the sailing of the army, in the Peninsula by the French. 2nd.—of the geographical character of the country upon which the operations were about to be conducted.

English  
army sails  
for Lisbon  
and Cadiz.

#### MILITARY STRENGTH, ETC., OF THE CONTENDING POWERS.

*England* had not at this period more than about 80,000 men disposable for a war in Europe, and of these 30,000, collected from various quarters, were

Military  
strength of  
England.

destined for the Peninsula. The rest of her forces were absorbed in the defence of the colonies, or consisted of militia and volunteers.

*Of Spain.* *Spain*, as we have seen above, had had her regular army, to a great extent, weakened by the prompt action of Napoleon. At the time of the outbreak she had not more than some 70,000 troops in the country; and these were but indifferently officered, and badly organized. The people, however, were animated by a bitterly hostile spirit against their invaders, and were soon armed in great numbers, and enrolled into partially drilled bodies.

*Of Portugal.* *Portugal* had no army worth speaking of; but the spirit of the nation was good; the local militia soon made excellent soldiers, and we may mention here, that as the war continued, the Portuguese levies, trained and led by English officers, fought side by side with the troops of Great Britain, and rendered them a most efficient assistance throughout the operations.

*Of France.* *France* might have been termed a nation of soldiers. For many years she had been incessantly at war, and her armies were not only composed, in large part, of experienced and well-trying troops, but they were strong in the confidence produced by almost constant victory, and in the leadership of renowned generals. The military resources of the nation were enormous. Napoleon had at his disposal about 600,000 men, and of these he had before long despatched some 80,000 into Spain. This force had been passed across the Spanish frontier by both Bayonne and Perpignan; but the bulk of it had entered by Bayonne, occupied Vittoria and Burgos upon the high road to Madrid, all the fortresses upon the French frontier, and Madrid

Position of  
the French  
armies at  
the time of  
the sailing  
of the Eng-  
lish army.

itself. From these positions it had advanced in several directions to crush the Spanish insurgents, now becoming numerous, and one French corps was marching in the direction of Cadiz—a point to be noticed, as its subsequent fate materially influenced the disposition of the British army. The invaders, though successfully resisted in some of the cities (such as Saragossa and Valencia), had in general routed and subdued the insurgents, and Napoleon, considering all dangerous resistance quelled, had left for Paris. In Portugal Junot, whose army was some 25,000 strong, had for a time been hard pressed to put down the insurrection, and after some bloody successes against the people, marked by a pitiless cruelty, he had yielded up parts of the country, but still retained possession, in force, of Lisbon, and of the fortresses of Elvas, Almeida, and Peniché.

Such was the situation of affairs about the time of the sailing of the British troops.

#### MILITARY TOPOGRAPHY OF THE PENINSULA.

We now pass to a consideration of the geographical character of the Peninsula. The natural features of the earth exercise a most important influence upon the operations of armies. They generally decide the nature and design of a campaign, for it can be readily seen that the existence and direction of mountain ranges and of rivers, or of impassable or even difficult ground, must frequently control the movements that can be made by the troops—they give in fact, in a military sense, strength or weakness to a country. Artificial features enhance or lessen the importance of the

Importance  
of an ac-  
quaintance  
with the  
topography  
of a  
country.

natural ones, and, therefore, while speaking of these latter, we must consider also the constructions—such as roads, bridges, and fortresses—which have been built either to overcome or to strengthen them. Before entering upon the study of any campaign, the country in which it was fought should be made the subject of careful consideration; and not only the general situation of its features (both natural and artificial), but also the details of their character, be understood and mastered. The roads being good or bad, the rivers fordable or unfordable, navigable or the reverse, are points of the greatest moment in war, and these details, as well as many others of a like nature, and of similarly great value, should all be studied. Information upon military particulars of this description concerning a country, is comprised under what is termed its "Military Geography," or what is perhaps a more correct term (as details artificial as well as natural are considered), its "Military Topography."\*

General  
description  
of the  
Peninsula.

A glance at Map I. will show at once that the Peninsula is both intersected by numerous mountain ranges, and traversed by very many rivers. It is described generally by Lavallée, the great military geographer, as being "a chaos of mountains and deep defiles, where 300 men might stop an army—of bare plains—of ravines impenetrable in winter on account of their waters, and in summer on account of their steepness—of rivers having dangerous fords and not many bridges—of isolated towns surrounded by walls—and of few roads."

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\* Geography means, strictly speaking, a description of the mere natural earth. Topography a general description of places.

The configuration of the surface of the Peninsula is most peculiar. The country rises up at all points from the coast towards the centre, and the central portion of it consists of a large and comparatively flat plateau, of which the height is many feet above the level of the sea. It is often of importance to understand the relative elevations of the portions of a country's service, and to be able to do this, one of the first things to notice is the course of the great rivers. Water must, as we know, flow downwards; if, therefore, we trace these rivers and some of the streams flowing into them to their various sources, note the spots at which they rise, and then in our minds join these spots with an imaginary line, it is evident that the ground over which this line would pass must be comparatively very elevated. Such a line, from which the waters *part* or flow downwards, is called the "*line of water-parting*" (and often the "*water-shed*" of a country. We can trace it in the Peninsula, from Cape Tarifa in the south, running eastwards along the Alpujarras, and then turning to the north, and following the crest-line of the Iberian mountains until it meets the great chain of the Pyrenees. This latter chain-completely traverses the Peninsula from west to east, and its slopes form a high wall from which the country descends abruptly towards the north, in the direction of the sea, or of France. In the south of Spain, the Alpujarras form a similar wall, elevated high above the Mediterranean, and from which the country slopes steeply towards the south—the sea-coast. The Iberian mountains connect the Pyrenees in the north with the Alpujarras in the south, and are composed of

Configura-  
tion of its  
surface.

The line  
of water-  
parting (or  
water-  
shed).

numerous ridges (or sierras), which bear different names, such as the Sierras Alcaraz, Cuença, Urbion Reynosa, &c. These descend with some steepness towards the east, *i.e.*, towards the river Ebro and the Mediterranean; but on the west incline very gradually towards the Atlantic. It is because this western slope comprises the central portion of the Peninsula, and is at first so very gradual, that the middle of the country has the plateau-like character above alluded to.

Pyramidal  
shape of the  
country.

The whole country may in fact be compared in shape to a gigantic pyramid, half-way severed, and of which the summit (or the central table-land) rises on an average to from 2,000 to 3,000 feet above the sea.

#### CLIMATE, RESOURCES, ETC.

Barrenness  
of central  
portion.

It results from this peculiar formation that we find in the Peninsula great varieties of climate, and that an army operating in that country is exposed to frequent changes of temperature, and to the extremes of heat and cold. There are also great differences in the products of the soil. The elevated central portion, especially around Madrid, consists of barren and wind-swept plains, without water, and crowned by jagged ridges or sierras.

The provinces between this portion and the surrounding coast, have a more productive soil. In the Castiles, and the south of Leon, wheat and barley grow freely, and in Estremadura there are extensive tracts of pasture land where large flocks of sheep are reared.

The southern and eastern provinces of Spain (such



as Andalusia and Valencia), which border upon the sea, are however the rich districts of the Peninsula. <sup>Rich provinces of Spain.</sup> Here the soil heated by an almost tropical sun, and fanned by the breezes from the ocean, produces in abundance almost every kind of fruit and of grain, and, where irrigated, forms excellent pasture land.

In Portugal, corn is grown on the table lands, <sup>Small resources of Portugal.</sup> especially in the Alemtejo, and the northern provinces; but though the soil of this kingdom is in parts fertile, there is comparatively but little cultivation.

In fact, the Peninsula is by nature a fairly fertile country, but its inhabitants are indolent and averse <sup>Indolence of inhabitants.</sup> to labour, and many of its provinces were, at the time of which we write, but thinly populated.

It was a country, therefore, in which the certainty of obtaining provisions readily and at any point, could not be counted upon, and it has been said with some exaggeration, with reference to this and to the difficult nature of the ground, that "a small army must be defeated in it and a large one starve."

Regarding the description of carriage which could <sup>Nature of transport.</sup> be procured by an army in it, animals and waggons for transport were most difficult to obtain in any quarter. Mules and bullocks were used almost entirely for drawing the carts of the country, and horses were indifferent and scarce.

#### MOUNTAINS.

Traversing the slope which descends westward <sup>Mountain chains to W. of central plateau.</sup> from the crest line of the Iberian mountains, and which includes the central plateau, are three great

chains; these are named differently at various points of their course, but it is sufficient to term them here, the Sierra Morena, the Mountains of Toledo, and the Sierra Guadarama.

Four great  
river basins.

Together with the Pyrenees in the north, and the Alpujarras in the south, they divide this slope into four distinct basins, down which four of the principal rivers of the Peninsula flow towards the sea; these basins are those of the Guadalquiver, the Guadiana, the Tagus, and the Duero.

Direction  
and character  
of these chains  
important  
to notice.

The general course and nature of these mountain chains should be especially noticed, for they form great barriers, completely separating these river basins one from the other, and their existence is a very peculiar feature of the country.

*The Alpujarras.*—A short and very high chain. Its summits are covered with perpetual snow, and to the north it throws out many spurs, through which the Guadalquiver must force its way.

*The Sierra Morena*, springing directly from the Iberian mountains, and terminating at the mouth of the Guadiana. Its northern slopes, at the commencement, mingle with the central plateau; but the southern are rugged and precipitous.

Communi-  
cation  
between  
basins of  
Tagus and  
Guadiana,  
easy at their  
heads.

*The Mountains of Toledo.*—This chain blends at first, almost imperceptibly with the central plateau, so that the basins of the Tagus and Guadiana, are only separated at their heads by a few insensible eminences; and thus communication from one basin to the other, near the sources of these rivers, is easy. As the range approaches the Portuguese frontier, it takes the name of the Sierra San Mahmed, and runs close to the river Guadiana. Thence it turns towards

the south, under the names of the Sierra Estremos and Sierra Monchique, throwing off branches to the east, which impede the course of the Guadiana, and finally terminates at Cape St. Vincent.

*The Sierra Guadarama.*—This chain springs from the Iberian mountains, under the name of the Somo Sierra; and is, at its commencement, where the high roads from Burgos to Madrid pass over it, lofty and precipitous. It extends in a sinuous line towards the south-west. Between Madrid and Ciudad-Rodrigo it throws off branches to the north, which form formidable barriers, and is remarkable at the Sierras of Gredos and Gata, for the width and steepness of its slopes to the south. After crossing the Portuguese frontier, the chain divides into three main branches. Of these, the principal is the Sierra Estrella from which spurs interrupt and bar the river Tagus, and jut out towards the Coa and Agueda, and which extends (after assuming the name of the Sierra Cintra) to beyond Lisbon.

Ruggedness  
of the Sierra  
Guadarama  
separating  
the basins  
of the  
Tagus and  
the Duero.

*The Pyrenees.*—That portion of this great mountain range which runs westward from the Sierra Reynosa to Cape Finisterre is very wild and difficult in character, and to the north of Portugal throws off many branches southward. Notice should be taken of the series of mountain ridges enclosing the basins of the Minho and the Sil, of the long spurs which cross the Portuguese frontier between the rivers Sabor, Tua and Tamega, and of the general mountainous nature of the whole of this N.E. corner of the Peninsula.

Mountain-  
ous cha-  
racter of the  
N.E. corner  
of the  
Peninsula.

We have now considered the course and character of the mountain ranges and slopes which branch off

to the *westward* of the crest line of the Iberian mountains. Let us now turn our attention to those on the *eastward* of this crest-line. The Iberian mountains themselves sloping down on this side, together with that portion of the Pyrenees extending to the east of the Sierra Reynosa, enclose the basin of the Ebro, a large and important river. Many ridges and spurs thrown off from both these great chains intersect this basin, and some reach down and impede the course of the river, rendering its navigation impossible. The principal mass of the chain of the Pyrenees is steep and rocky, and covered with snow and ice. That portion of it which extends across the continent, separating France from Spain, and called the continental Pyrenees, is highest about the centre of its length, and lowest towards the two extremities, south of Bayonne and Perpignan.

Mountain  
spurs inter-  
secting the  
basin of the  
Ebro.

Frontier  
line be-  
tween  
Spain and  
France.

*The frontier line* between France and Spain, commencing at the mouth of the Bidassoa (near Bayonne), runs in its general direction along this great mountain barrier, until it strikes the Mediterranean at Cape Creux. It is dotted upon the map.

#### ROADS.

It can be readily understood, that to carry roads over such a multitude of steep and formidable mountain ranges, and over the innumerable spurs which jut out from them, is a matter of some difficulty. Roads in mountain districts are naturally, as a rule, conducted for convenience over the lowest depressions of the chains, and the spots where they cross or pass are denominated "passes." These passes were comparatively few in number, and many of them, though

good in fine weather, became impracticable during the rainy season. We need only notice, at this stage, those roads crossing the boundary lines which divide France and Portugal from Spain and one or two others.

*From France into Spain*, across the Pyrenees, there were but two high roads; one from Bayonne, through Irun and Vittoria, to Burgos, and from thence to Madrid by two different routes, viz.—either by Aranda and the *Somo Sierra Pass*, or by Valladolid and the *Escorial Pass*. Two great roads from France into Spain.

One from Perpignan, by Belgarde, to Barcelona; here the road divided into two branches—one leading to the south of Spain through Valencia, the other to Madrid, by Lerida and Saragossa.

There were other roads and paths traversing this range, but they were, as a rule, impracticable for wheeled transport, and many of them mere footpaths.

*From Portugal into Spain* there were but few roads, and Lisbon and Madrid were connected by but two good lines of communication (*i.e.*, good in a military sense, which means available for the passage of all arms), these were:— Two great roads from Portugal into Spain.

1st, the road by Elvas, Badajoz and Almaraz;

2nd, the road by Coimbra, Viseu, Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo.

It can be seen that the ridge of the Sierra Estrella interposed between these two highways. Across it there existed only indifferent roads, one from Abrantes, by Thomar and Espinhal, to Almeida. Other roads of the Peninsula.

A tolerably good one led from Abrantes, through Alcantara and Coria, and thence over the Gata, to Ciudad-Rodrigo.

## RIVERS.

Great rivers  
only navi-  
gable for  
short  
distances.

The great rivers of the Peninsula were only navigable for a comparatively short distance from their mouths; so that the transport of stores by them for many miles into the interior was impossible. It should be remarked, that the navigable portions of the two most important ones—viz, the Tagus and the Duero—lie in Portugal.

Their  
general  
character.

Flowing, as these rivers do, between ranges of mountains, and winding among their many spurs, they are frequently difficult of access, and the great roads of the country traverse them at comparatively few points. Obstacles such as rocky ledges occur often throughout their course, and they are, as a rule, dry in summer and rapid and swollen in winter.

Bridges  
and fords.

Bridges and fords are found at intervals, but the former, with some exceptions, are of a nature easily destroyed, and the latter are frequently available only at certain seasons.

Some of these rivers require more special notice, and attention should be paid to those which cross and flow near the Portuguese frontier.

1. *The Guadalquivir*.—Flowing past Seville, an important city, where there was a cannon foundry; navigable as far as that point.

2. *The Guadiana*.—This river rises among some marshes of the central plateau, and passing by Merida and Badajoz, flows through Portugal, forming its boundary along portions of its course. In Portugal, *no bridge exists across it*.

Important  
bridges on  
the Tagus.

3. *The Tagus*.—This river, in its upper portion, has a rocky bed and high banks, and at any other time but during the extreme droughts of summer, is very diffi-



cult of passage; except at that season, from Toledo to Almaraz it is almost impassable, but at Almaraz and Alcantara there were good bridges. At this last point spurs from the north and south encroach upon it; and as it enters the frontier of Portugal it is tortuous and full of rapids, forming a serious obstacle. This is its character as far as Abrantes, where it widens out. From this point to Lisbon it varies from 300 yards to five miles in breadth, contracting before it enters the sea.

4. *The Mondego* flows at first among almost inaccessible mountains, and emerging into the plains at Coimbra, enters the sea at Figueras.

5. *The Duero* takes its rise in the Iberian Mountains, and passes Aranda and Valladolid. As it nears the frontier of Portugal it encounters a ridge springing from the Pyrenees and turns southwards, forming for some distance the boundary between Spain and Portugal. It then crosses the latter country and enters the sea near Oporto. Above this place it is more than 300 yards wide, and in winter is difficult of passage.

6. *The Minho*.—This river traverses a very mountainous and broken country, and is joined near Orense by the Sil, which also forces its way through many mountain spurs. After this junction it issues from the mountains, and from this point to the sea forms the boundary between Spain and Portugal.

7. *The Ebro*—an important river—rises near the junction of the Iberian Mountains with the Pyrenees, and at first flows through a confined and mountainous country. It passes by Tudela and Saragossa. Below the latter place obstacles impede its course at every moment until it empties itself into the sea near Tortosa.

Affluents  
of the great  
rivers.

We have given above only the principal rivers of the Peninsula, but the map will show that as each one of these courses to the ocean, many minor streams flow into it. Descending from the enclosing mountains on the right hand and on the left, they mingle their waters with those of the main river, and are called its "affluents." To enumerate all these by name is unnecessary, but we mention the following as they have become familiar in connection with the operations we are about to enter upon.

*Affluent of the Guadiana.*—The Albuera, skirting the road from Seville to Badajoz.

*Affluents of the Tagus.*—The Guadarama, entering below Toledo.

The Alberche, entering above Talavera.

The Zezere, rising in the Sierra Estrella, and terminating below Abrantes.

*Affluent of the Mondego.*—The Alva entering near Murcella.

*Affluents of the Duero.*—These are important, and are—

On the *Left*,

The Tormes, flowing by Salamanca;

The Agueda, flowing by Ciudad-Rodrigo, and close to the frontier of Portugal;

The Coa, flowing past Almeida.

On the *Right*,

The Pisuerga, flowing by Burgos and Valladolid, being joined by the Carrion between these places;

The Esla, flowing past Benavente, and joining the Duero below Zamora;

The Sabor, Tua, and Tamega, descending between mountain spurs across the frontier of Portugal.

## HARBOURS.

These are numerous in the Peninsula, and are many of them good. Beginning at the northern coast, near the French frontier, and going round by the western and southern coasts, we may draw attention to the following.

St. Sebastian, Ferrol, Corunna—good ports and fortified ;

Vigo, a small but safe harbour ;

Oporto, at the mouth of the Duero, rather a dangerous port, by reason of its sandbanks and islands ;

Figueras, at the mouth of the Mondego, a small harbour ;

Lisbon, on the Tagus, a very fine port ; it was strongly fortified. The city of Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, contained an arsenal and the chief military and naval establishments of the kingdom.

Cadiz, a large port with fortified roadstead, situated upon the island of Leon, and separated from the main land by a channel.

Gibraltar, a large port with an almost impregnable fortress, belonging to England. The harbour is not a very good one.

Carthagena,	} All good ports and more or less fortified.
Alicante,	
Tarragona,	
Barcelona,	

## FORTRESSES.

Fortresses are usually erected by a nation to defend what are considered particularly important points of its territory. We have seen that there were only

Fortresses  
of the  
Peninsula,  
their posi-

tion and  
object.

two great roads leading from France into Spain, viz. :—those through Bayonne and Perpignan. We therefore find numerous Spanish fortresses placed to guard these roads, or the passes and country near them—such as, upon the western road, St. Sebastian and Pampeluna—upon the eastern, Figueras, Gerona, and Barcelona. The city of Burgos, at the junction of two roads towards Madrid, was defended by a strong castle.

Upon the frontier dividing Spain from Portugal, the only two good roads between Madrid and Lisbon (*viâ* those through Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz), were guarded by important fortresses which watched each other upon opposite sides of the boundary line. The Portuguese fortress of Almeida was faced by the Spanish one of Ciudad-Rodrigo, and the Portuguese fortress of Elvas by the Spanish one of Badajoz.

Gibraltar guards for England the passage between the Atlantic and Mediterranean Seas.

#### REMARKS.

By reflecting upon what has been said regarding the contending nations, noting the strength and position of their armies, and studying the details such as we have endeavoured to sketch out of the military topography of the Peninsula, which though dry must necessarily be carefully gone into, we can understand the motives for certain measures which would not otherwise be clear to us, and can weigh their value. We can see moreover some strong and weak points in the relative position and circumstances of the hostile armies, and can appreciate beforehand the difficulties against which each would have to contend.

1st. The reason for the selection of Lisbon and Cadiz as the starting points for the British army is made clear.

Reasons for selecting Lisbon and Cadiz as starting points.

It might for instance appear, at first sight, that it would have been more advantageous to have directed the army towards the western or eastern extremity of the Pyrenees, in order that by at once operating against the roads through Bayonne or Perpignan, it might intercept the enemy's line of supplies, and interpose between his armies and France, but the *numbers* of the French (so superior as we have seen to those of the British) would alone have rendered this course impracticable. Great Britain could most efficiently aid her Allies by attacking the French at their weakest points—viz. :—those at the greatest distance from France, and therefore from succour and support.

Impossibility of attacking directly the French line of communication.

Weak points of the French.

On this ground alone, an advance against Junot in Portugal, and against those French corps the furthest detached from their own country was the more judicious.

To carry out such an advance, some spot (or spots) upon the western coast of the Peninsula, or upon those parts of the northern or southern coasts immediately adjoining it, were the most favourable in situation. Lisbon, therefore, and Cadiz were upon that ground clearly suitable. Moreover they were both *good harbours*, and also in themselves, *places of importance*. It was of the first moment to wrest Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, and containing large military and naval establishments, from the French hands, and its capture would probably free that kingdom from the enemy. It was also of consequence that the French should not be permitted to seize Cadiz, and so gain a hold over one of the richest provinces of Spain, viz., Andalusia.

Reasons of the importance of Lisbon and Cadiz.

The fall of this city would not only have been a serious blow to Spain, but the English would have been debarred by it from using the province of Andalusia, as one from which they might themselves operate.

Strength of  
the frontier  
of Portugal.

There was also a military reason of the greatest weight which made the seizure of Lisbon (*as the first step towards the possession of Portugal*) desirable, and that was the natural *strength of the frontier of that kingdom towards Spain*. Although it involves some repetition of what we have already said, we again draw especial attention to this.

Beginning at the south, and following the frontier line, we have first the river Guadiana, without any bridges over it, backed by the Sierras of Estremos and Monchique and covered by the fortress of Elvas. Then the spurs of the Sierra San Mahmed and Sierra Estrella, which, meeting on the banks of the Tagus, scarcely allow a passage for that river, and make of it a tortuous and broken stream, itself an additional obstacle. Then the Sierra Estrella, and the spurs it throws out between the rivers Coa and Agueda, covered by the fortress of Almeida. Then the Duero. Then the mountain range to the north, with the spurs between the Sabor, the Tua, and the Tamega; and last of all the river Minho. Portugal, therefore, presented towards Spain a great natural barrier, the two main roads across which were defended by fortresses. This kingdom once gained, the British and Portuguese would have a strong position, from which to attack the enemy in Spain, and one from which it would be most difficult to dislodge them. It is true that the resources of the country



were small; but the English had the command of the sea, from which they could obtain their supplies, and would possess the navigable portions both of the Tagus and the Duero, two of the most important of the Peninsula rivers. There was also another reason why the possession of Portugal would be of value, and that was, that an advance into Spain from a *westerly direction, i.e.,* from the direction of Portugal, up one of the great river basins, would be easier than an advance from any other direction [such as the north or south], over the mountain barriers which run east and west, and would turn these latter (as we will explain further on) into a disadvantage to Napoleon.

2nd. The true and serious nature of the obstacles which Napoleon by his treacherous conduct had quietly overcome, and some of the peculiar advantages of the position he now held, become evident.

There were but two roads as we have seen, both watched by fortresses, upon which supplies for a large army could be moved across the great mountain barrier of the Pyrenees from France into Spain. He had secured these roads and surprised these fortresses; he had also passed the difficult range of the Iberian mountains, occupied the castle of Burgos, and seized Madrid. He had thus established himself in the centre of Spain, and could move at pleasure from the elevated ground down the basins of the Duero, the Tagus, or the Guadiana, in support of the army under Junot, which had been already *pushed past* the strong fortress-guarded frontier of Portugal. His numbers also gave him the power of operating along two or three of the great river basins at once, thus threaten-

Advantages  
possessed  
by Napo-  
leon.

Could  
operate by  
several ba-  
sins at once.



ing many points, as well as holding under subjection different portions of the Peninsula.

Disadvantages he laboured under.

3rd. Some disadvantages of his position are also made clear to us.

Difficulty of supporting his separated forces in these basins.

It should be noticed (1), that the mountain ranges—such as the Sierra Guadarama, the mountains of Toledo, and the Sierra Morena—which separate the basins of the great rivers, were crossed by but few roads, and that these led over narrow passes and difficult gorges. The French armies, though they could enter these river basins easily from the central plateau, would, as they descended them, become separated by difficult mountain chains, so that they could not move rapidly to the assistance of one another, nor keep up a good communication. It is

Advantages of an advance from the west.

easy to see that the existence and direction of these parallel ribs of mountains influenced materially the position of the French. Napoleon, having secured the possession of them, could it is true use them as barriers against an enemy coming from the south, but if it became necessary for him to face an enemy that could break out at pleasure from any point in the west, [for instance, against an enemy holding Portugal,] they would act as inconvenient obstacles to his own army, dividing his front, which must be extended in these different basins to watch that enemy.

Of guarding his long line of communication.

It should be noticed (2), that the French line of communication by Bayonne was a long one, and passed over ranges of mountains. *It required many men to guard it against a hostile population.* Strong detachments had to be employed watching it and in escorting all the supplies, and this also weakened the French army. We may mention, that Napoleon made

use, chiefly, of the one high road through Bayonne for the transport of his troops and *matériel* throughout the war. It led more directly than that by Perpignan to the centre of Spain, and to have protected two long roads, separated by the mountain spurs which jut out between the Pyrenees and the Ebro (and across which there was but bad communication), would have been very difficult.

It should be noticed (3), that from the wild and rugged nature of Spain, and the mountain fastnesses that are everywhere at hand, that country is especially adapted for defence. To seek out and subdue the insurgents in their chosen place of refuge was no easy task; and yet whilst they retained these, they could always make sudden descents upon and harass the French.

The defensible nature of Spain.

We see, therefore, that the French generals, in spite of the number of their soldiery, were about to contend against many disadvantages, and among these we should also include, in fairness, the greater readiness with which the bulk of the peasantry would naturally give information to their enemies who were coming to fight for them in the Peninsula, than to themselves. Less advantage was, as a fact, gained by the English in this way during the war than could have been supposed possible, but still, comparatively speaking, they procured better information from the peasantry than the French did.

Probable difficulty in procuring information.

With regard to the prospects under which the British were entering upon the war, England had, of course, upon her side as relative advantages, all the points which we have above alluded to as bearing disadvantageously upon the French. Her army was

Advantages possessed by the British.

going to fight in a friendly country difficult for an enemy to conquer, whose government and inhabitants would, it was expected (an expectation never realised), aid it with ability as well as zeal. She had money—the sinews of war—and she had also the command of the sea, a point of inestimable value. This undisputed possession of the ocean afforded her a facility in forwarding supplies, and gave her also the power of distracting the attention of the French by threatening descents upon various parts of the coast.

Disadvan-  
tages  
laboured  
under.

The principal disadvantage which she laboured under from the outset, was the numerical weakness of her army compared with that of the French.

## LECTURE II.

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THE troops composing the British army were collected from different quarters. One portion, under Sir Arthur Wellesley (about 9,000), sailed from Cork; another, under Sir John Moore (about 10,000), from Sweden, where it had been previously sent upon an expedition to aid the Swedes against Russia, and which had terminated; and a third, under General Spencer (about 5,000), from Gibraltar.

Sir Arthur Wellesley had the chief command at the outset, but two senior officers to him (Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Hew Dalrymple) were ordered at the same time to join the army. The troops under Wellesley and Moore were directed towards the coast of Portugal, and those under Spencer towards Cadiz. It happened, however, that the destination of Spencer's force was almost immediately changed, for a great Spanish victory—about the solitary one of the whole war—was at this time gained in Andalusia over the French corps which, as we mentioned on page 7, was moving upon Cadiz. It was decided that the fact of this victory rendered it unnecessary to land a force in this quarter. Cadiz and Andalusia were, in consequence of the French defeat, saved from

immediate danger; and Wellesley at once ordered Spencer to join him in Portugal.

The selection of a spot for disembarkation had next to be considered.

Objective  
point of the  
campaign.

The coast of Portugal is a difficult one upon which to effect a landing. Lisbon was, as we know, the point which it was the main *object* of the expedition to seize, *i.e.* (in technical language), it was "*the objective point*" of the campaign; but to attempt to attack this city at once, by a descent at the mouth of the Tagus, would have been hazardous. The heavy surf, the forts, and the strength of the French, all rendered it unadvisable. Peniché, a little harbour north of it upon the coast, was also commanded by French guns; and for these reasons, Figueras, at the mouth of the Mondego river, where a landing, it was discovered, could be effected without opposition, was chosen.

Choice of a  
landing-  
place.

Army  
advances.

On the 1st of August, 1808, Sir Arthur Wellesley began to land his troops; Spencer arrived a few days subsequently, and without waiting for the force under Sir John Moore, the army advanced towards Lisbon, and entered upon the long series of campaigns which lasted for more than five years in the Peninsula.

#### CAMPAIGN OF VIMIERO—1808.

Combat of  
Roliça.

This campaign we shall allude to briefly. As the army moved towards Lisbon it came into collision for the first time with the enemy, who had drawn up to oppose it, near the village of Roliça, on the 17th August. The reason for the French giving battle at this point was because a range of heights,

crossing the main road to Lisbon, offered a strong position from which to oppose the British advance.

Sir Arthur, after some sharp fighting on the 17th, drove the French from their position, and as they fell back in the direction of Torres Vedras, advanced to Vimiero, keeping towards the sea coast in order to open communication with the fleet, and protect the landing of reinforcements. On the 20th a brigade under General Anstruther (about 4,000) appeared off the coast and was safely disembarked, and twelve days' provisions having been collected, orders were given for an immediate movement towards Torres Vedras.

Sir John Moore was at this time close to the mouth of the Mondego, and it was Sir Arthur Wellesley's plan that he should land there, and moving down upon Santarem threaten to cut off the French communication with Elvas, while he (Sir Arthur) endeavoured to reach Lisbon.

Movement  
on Vimiero.

Sir Arthur  
Wellesley's  
plan of  
operations.

The country intervening between Vimiero and Lisbon was most difficult, the only good road between these points leading through the pass or defile of Torres Vedras. There was, however, a very indifferent road which turned this pass by the sea coast, and Sir Arthur hoped by attempting a daring march along it (it was not apparently watched) to reach Mafra, and interpose his army, by a surprise, between Junot and Lisbon.

This plan of Sir Arthur Wellesley was never carried out. Sir Harry Burrard arrived off Vimiero in a man-of-war on the night of the 20th, and, without landing, counter-ordered the movement, directing the army to stand fast where it was, until joined by Sir John Moore.

Sir H.  
Burrard  
counter-  
orders it.



French  
attack the  
British.

The French, in the meantime, had determined to assume the offensive, and, on the morning of the 21st, appeared opposite to the English position, and rashly attacked it without reconnoitring; the efforts of Junot being principally directed to force the left of the British, and drive them back upon the sea.

Battle of  
Vimiero.

The result of this battle (in which the French force numbered about 14,000, the British about 18,000) was a complete victory for the British (who were commanded during the fight by Sir Arthur Wellesley); and at the close of the day the British right held the Torres Vedras road, while the bulk of the French had been driven some distance to the east of it. Sir Arthur now strongly

Suggestions  
for the  
pursuit  
urged by  
Sir Arthur  
Wellesley.

urged Sir Harry Burrard, who had landed before the end of the action, to follow up the victory, by making a rapid march upon Torres Vedras with a portion of his force, in order to gain that pass before the French, while the remainder of the troops closely pursued the enemy, driving him over the mountains to the east. Sir Harry, however, considered that a small portion only of the French army had been engaged, and was against further pursuit, judging that it would be more judicious to wait for Sir John Moore. The following morning Sir Hew Dalrymple joined, and took the command out of the hands of Sir Harry Burrard; and thus the command of the army was changed three times in as many days, and in the immediate presence of the enemy. There was now some doubt as to whether to move forward or not, when (on the 23rd) Junot, who in consequence of the inaction of Sir Harry Burrard had been allowed to make good his retreat by Torres Vedras upon

Sir Harry  
Burrard  
dissents.

Sir Hew  
Dalrymple  
assumes  
command.

Junot ne-  
gociates for  
terms.



Lisbon, sent an emissary to the British camp to negotiate for terms. This step was taken by him in consequence of the difficulty he experienced in keeping down the population of Lisbon, the fear he stood in of a forced retreat through the hostile country of Spain, and the probability of such a retreat being rendered eventually inevitable by the arrival of Sir John Moore and a rising of the Portuguese.

After a short negotiation, a convention was agreed to, by which the French army *consented to evacuate Portugal (giving up Lisbon, Elvas, Almeida, and all the fortresses), provided they were sent back with their artillery and arms to France.* Convention of Cintra is agreed upon.

#### REMARKS.

The great importance of the defile of Torres Vedras in this campaign, and the way in which the existence of the mountain ranges necessarily affected the question of what operations were possible or otherwise, are matters strikingly prominent. Importance of defile of Torres Vedras.

We may now mention that as the term "*strategy*" (see introduction) means the art of moving troops advantageously when not actually fighting with an enemy; and "*tactics*" the art of moving them when in battle,\* so any point not actually on a field of battle, the occupation of which in war would confer any advantage of position, is called a "*strategical point*"; if the degree of advantage is important it is called an "*important strategical point*"; and if it is Definition of "strategical points," &c.

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\* The two words are derived from the Greek: Strategy from "Strategos" a general; Tactics from "Taxis," an order of battle.

so great as to render it likely that it will be decisive in character, it is termed a "*decisive strategical point*."

Points actually forming part of a field of battle, and which confer some advantage on those holding them, are termed—not strategical—but "*tactical points*," or "important tactical points," or "decisive tactical points," as the case may be.

The defile of Torres Vedras may be justly termed to have been an important strategical point in this campaign. To reach Lisbon from Vimiero troops must have turned this defile, which would have been difficult; or forced it, which if it were stoutly held by the enemy would have entailed a severe loss of life.

Remark as  
to Sir A.  
Wellesley's  
proposal to  
pursue after  
Vimiero.

To get through or past the defile was the great difficulty. The facts subsequently made known, prove that had Sir Arthur's advice to Sir Harry Burrard for an immediate advance after Vimiero to Torres Vedras been followed, the defile might have been seized and passed and Junot cut off from Lisbon.

Sir Arthur, with the correctness of judgment which was his peculiar characteristic, had formed a more true idea of the situation and circumstances of the French, and of what it was possible for the British by a prompt and resolute stroke to achieve, than his superior had; but at the same time the unwillingness of Sir Harry Burrard to risk an advance, believing as he did that the French were stronger than they were, and knowing that after a few days Sir John Moore would arrive and strengthen him, can be readily understood. He had at the time (being Commander-in-Chief) greater responsibility than Sir Arthur, and few men have possessed the latter's talent.

With regard to the plan of action proposed just before the battle of Vimiero by Sir Arthur Wellesley, viz., that Moore should move down by Santarem, while he himself moved by the sea coast, and endeavoured to pass Junot by surprise, it can be seen that even in case such a surprise could not have been carried out, still that the direction of Moore's march would have been calculated to aid in the design of reaching Lisbon. The difficult mountain chain running up from Torres Vedras towards the north and throwing out spurs towards the sea and the river Tagus, and which intervenes between the roads leading from Vimiero and Santarem respectively towards Lisbon, would have made it almost impossible for Junot if he moved to attack Moore's force, to have got back in time to oppose Sir Arthur's efforts to force his way towards Lisbon. The presence of Moore was also likely to draw away Junot from the Torres Vedras defile, or to cause him to hold it in weaker force.

However, on the other hand, the long mountain chain running up from Torres Vedras northwards,—communication across which was difficult,—would have divided the two forces, one from the other. The army would then have been advancing by what is called a "*double line of operations*."

In war, so long as the various columns composing an army move in one general direction and keep up a constant communication with each other (*although the column may be marching upon many roads*), then the army is said to be advancing by a *single line of operations*. When, however, an army is divided into two or three distinct portions complete in themselves

Description  
of plan of  
campaign,  
originally  
proposed  
by Sir A.  
Wellesley.

Discussion  
of it.

Definition  
of the term  
"single"  
and  
"double"  
line of  
operations.

(i.e., something more than mere detachments), and when these portions, as they march, are so separated one from the other (either by distance or by the nature of the country) that they cannot preserve any regular communication, then the army is said to be advancing by a *double* (or *treble* as the case may be) *line of operations*. As a long mountain chain and its rugged spurs would have separated the two independent portions of the British army under Moore and Wellesley one from the other, and rendered communication between them precarious, the army would have been advancing by a double line.

Conditions  
of safety  
when  
operating  
by a double  
line.

Now, it is a rule in war that when an army is thus moving by a double (or treble) line, either each portion of it ought to be made so strong that it can oppose by itself the whole force of the enemy; or else the point where the separated portions of the army can concentrate or unite together, called technically the "*point of concentration*," should be so selected that the enemy cannot attack either portion before it has reached it and joined or "concentrated with" the others. If the divided portions be each weaker than the enemy, and can render no mutual support, they are liable to be attacked separately and beaten one after the other.

Consideration  
of  
whether  
Sir A. Wellesley's plan  
fulfilled  
these.

Now had Sir Arthur Wellesley's plan been carried out, the two portions of the British army, separated by the mountains, would hardly have fixed upon any point where they could have united with certainty before Junot could have attacked one or other of them; and it became therefore an important question whether each of them could count upon being a match for any force which Junot with due regard to his hold upon Lisbon, could bring against

it. Sir Arthur was, it appears, of opinion that they each could do so, and was as we now know correct in his judgment; but Sir Harry Burrard on the other hand, doubtful as he was of the French situation, thought it more judicious to act with caution and to await the junction of Moore.

In considering subsequent campaigns we shall have several opportunities of illustrating the dangers and failures, as well as the successes, which have attended armies operating by two or more independent lines, and of discussing the question further.

The frequent change of commanders was of course greatly against any vigorous plan of action being carried out by the British; and that the result of these changes was not more detrimental than it was, may be deemed a fortunate circumstance. In war there should be but one head, changed as seldom as possible. "Nothing is more important in war," (says Napoleon,) "than unity of command."

Evil of a  
constant  
change of  
command-  
ers.

The convention of Cintra, as we have seen, handed over Portugal to the British.

This convention (called the *Convention of Cintra*, from the name of the little town near which it was drawn up) was of such military importance, that some examination should be given to it. It excited a storm of indignation at the time in England, and a most unjustifiable clamour was raised, because Junot was not forced into an *unconditional* surrender, instead of being permitted to withdraw his army. But though some of the minor details of the convention were perhaps unwise, as a whole it was a most advantageous one for the British cause. Junot's

Indignation  
caused in  
England.

Advantages  
of this con-  
vention to  
the British.

retreat through Elvas still lay open. The army depended mainly for provisions on the fleet, which a gale would have driven from the coast, and it was therefore everything to secure the safety of the ships at once, by entering the mouth of the Tagus. If the convention had been refused and Junot driven to resistance, it would have been necessary to subdue the forts near Lisbon; after this, perhaps, to transport artillery by water to Abrantes, and thence, 70 miles by land, to besiege and take Elvas; and after that to take Almeida; and all this under the difficulties of bad roads, and a great scarcity of every description of carriage. After great loss, both of time and men, it is possible that the army might have gained what the convention at once secured to it, viz:—the possession of Portugal; but it is also possible, that before it had done so, the approaching forces of Napoleon, coming from Spain to Junot's succour, would have driven it to retreat. Without further loss, Portugal was set free, and its harbours, as well as the strong and fortified position which its frontier gave as a base for future operations against Spain, secured. Weighed against this, it was of little consequence that Junot, with his comparatively small force, had escaped to swell the already enormous armies of Napoleon. However, in consequence of the outcry raised in England, Sir Arthur Wellesley, Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Hew Dalrymple, were all ordered home to appear before a court of inquiry. They were acquitted of blame, and we have the recorded opinion of Napoleon himself, that the convention which concluded this campaign was a clear *advantage* to the English, and a mistake on the part of Junot. "I was about (he says) to send Junot to a council of war,

Recall of  
Sir Arthur  
Wellesley.

Advantage  
gained in  
this cam-  
paign.



when fortunately the English tried *their generals*, and so saved me the pain of punishing an old friend."

The strategical advantage then gained in this first campaign—and it was a great one—was the possession of that country, with its harbours open towards the sea; and its frontier, both naturally and artificially, strong towards Spain. It formed altogether a most excellent base from which to carry out operations against the French.

Strategical  
advantage  
gained in  
the cam-  
paign.

#### PREPARATIONS FOR THE NEXT CAMPAIGN.

During the arrangement of the convention of Cintra, Sir John Moore landed at Lisbon. His troops increased the British army to about 32,000 men. Sir Arthur Wellesley, Sir H. Burrard, and Sir Hew Dalrymple had been ordered to England, and the command of the forces devolved upon him.

Sir J.  
Moore  
lands at  
Lisbon.

A delay of some weeks occurred before operations against the French were resumed; this being mainly attributable to the indecision of the British Government, with regard to their future plans, and it was not until early in October that dispatches reached Moore, informing him that 10,000 men were to be sent from England under Sir David Baird, to be disembarked at Corunna; and instructing him to take the field himself with 20,000; form a junction with Baird (either in the interior of Spain or by a voyage round the coast); and advance to the assistance of the Spaniards.

Orders of  
the British  
Govern-  
ment to Sir  
J. Moore.

Moore had no definite plan of campaign given to him. He was merely instructed to aid the Spaniards (after his junction with Baird), as circumstances might suggest; and, considering that it would cause an unnecessary delay if he joined Baird by sea, he

Moore determines to concentrate with Baird at Salamanca.

directed the latter general, who soon after this landed at Corunna, to march through Galicia *and concentrate with him at Salamanca.*

Difficulties of the army.

Moore's troops had, as may be seen from the map, a very long march before them; the roads were bad, and the rainy season was coming on. He had to procure transport and arrange for supplies; but government had sent him little money, and the Portuguese, accustomed to breaches of faith on the part of their own rulers, distrusted all foreigners who could not pay in cash; and were suspicious and procrastinating. All these difficulties weighed equally upon Sir David Baird. That general, after his arrival at Corunna, was met by delays and obstacles of every description. To use the words of Napier "the local rulers were unfriendly, crafty, fraudulent; the peasantry suspicious, rude, disinclined towards strangers, and indifferent to public affairs; a few shots only were required to render theirs a hostile instead of a friendly greeting." It resulted from these harassing obstructions that the British forces did not begin this campaign as early as they might have done, and Moore was not fairly off from Lisbon to join Baird, who was marching from Corunna, until the 26th of October.

#### CHANGES WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE MEAN-TIME IN SPAIN.

Narrative reverts to the affairs of Spain.

Bearing this date in mind, we revert, before continuing the narrative of this campaign, to the affairs of Spain, in order to show the situation there at this period, and to render the events of the campaign intelligible.

We have stated that, at about the date of the sailing

of the British army for the Peninsula, the French had been generally successful in subduing the Spanish insurgents, and that Napoleon had left for Paris. But the defeat of the French corps moving upon Cadiz, which we drew attention to on page (7), and which took place shortly before the landing of the British force, was one of a series of temporary checks which now began to fall upon the French armies left under the command of Joseph, the Emperor's brother, who was ruling in Madrid. The whole of the inhabitants of Spain rose in arms; and large bodies, composed partly of regular troops and partly of peasantry, more or less drilled and organized, began to advance towards the capital, and assumed a threatening attitude.

Early successes of the Spaniards.

Joseph became alarmed, and, retiring from Madrid, retreated towards Vitoria, and collected the whole French army behind the Ebro.

Joseph retires behind the Ebro.

The Spaniards now considered victory as already obtained, and with extravagant ideas of their own power, the troops of Spain, hastily raised, indifferently disciplined, and ignorantly despising the French, advanced against Joseph, and even spoke of a subsequent invasion of France.

One body on the extreme left, took up a position in front of Bilbao, endeavouring to encircle and get round the French forces. Another crossing the Ebro, collected beyond Tudela, and a third massing lower down the river, in the province of Aragon, formed the right. Behind these troops other forces, in support, protected Madrid, which city was re-occupied by the Spanish. Everything at this time looked promising for Spain, but her troops were in reality per-

Spanish armies advance to the Ebro.

Napoleon  
pours rein-  
forcements  
into Spain.

Defeats the  
Spaniards.

Advances  
to Madrid.

Fall of  
Madrid.

fectly unequal both in numbers and military ability to contend with the soldiers and generals of France. Napoleon had been aroused to active energy by the position of his army, and the success of the British forces; and had begun, early in October, (*i.e.* about the same time that Sir J. Moore had received his instructions to advance from Lisbon and join Baird), to put his columns in movement towards the Pyrenees from every quarter of his empire, and on the 30th October (four days after Sir J. Moore had left Lisbon) quitted Paris to place himself at their head. As soon as his reinforcements, which were to raise the French army in the Peninsula to 250,000 men, arrived (during the month of November) in front of the Spaniards, the latter were routed and dispersed in every direction. Napoleon rapidly advanced, and having detached a corps towards the Carrion river to watch for the British and protect his right flank, moved towards Madrid—stormed the pass of the Somo Sierra—and on the 2nd December, bivouacked before the capital of Spain.

It was expected that the city of Madrid would make a long and determined resistance—but it did not. It fell in two days, *i.e.*, on the 4th December, before Napoleon. The faith, nevertheless, in its long continued defence, was so great throughout Spain, that its fall was scarcely credited, and this faith had, as we shall see, an influence upon the operations of the British army, under Sir J. Moore.

Having now said enough to make the intention and result of these operations intelligible, we again revert to them.

## LECTURE III.

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### CAMPAIGN OF CORUNNA, 1808-9.

AT the same time, then—viz. the 26th October—that Napoleon was pouring his forces across the Pyrenees into Spain, Sir John Moore's portion of the army had left Lisbon; and only about 10,000 British troops remained in Portugal to hold that country.

Before marching, Moore had been assured upon all sides, that the roads North of the Tagus were impassable for artillery and heavy carriages; he therefore felt obliged to divide his army, and arranged his march as follows:—

The main body to move—part by Coimbra, Viseu, and Almeida, and part by Alcantara and Coria—upon Ciudad-Rodrigo; and thence upon Salamanca. Only the light baggage and ammunition for immediate use were to be sent with this portion of the force.

The artillery, the cavalry, and a park of several hundred carriages, were to go round by Elvas, Badajoz, Almaraz, Talavera, Madrid, and the Escorial pass—a detour which added to their march some 150 miles—and so unite with the main body at Salamanca. This division of the force was placed under

Sir John Hope. The bulk of the ammunition was to go with it.

Magazines were to be formed at Almeida, and reserve stores and provisions were directed to that point.

Difficulties  
caused by a  
scarcity of  
carriage.

The great difficulty in obtaining carriage hampered Sir John Moore after he had marched from Lisbon, as it had delayed him in setting out, and compelled him to move his troops in small successive divisions.

Baird's portion of the army could not set out from Corunna until about the 9th of November; and then, on account of the great scarcity of carriage, the troops were obliged to march by but half a battalion at a time, and hire carts day by day.

Sir John Hope also (being in want of money and supplies, and losing many horses from glanders), was forced to move by six successive divisions, each one day's march behind the other.

In consequence of these many impediments to the concentration of the army, and in consequence also of Napoleon's successful advance upon Madrid, we find the British forces, on the 26th of November, separated in the following manner, in dangerous proximity to the enemy.

Position on  
26th Nov.,  
both of the  
British and  
French.

Moore at Salamanca.

Baird at Astorga, with his rear far behind, beyond Lugo.

Hope approaching the Escorial pass, with his rear at Talavera.

On the same day, Napoleon having dispersed the Spanish armies (and being therefore free to move with large forces in any direction), was near Aranda, on the road to Madrid, and a French corps, under



Lefebvre (about 30,000, or equal in strength to Baird's and Moore's forces united), was descending the Carrion river towards Valladolid, which was occupied by advanced detachments.

Napoleon, however, was ignorant of the proximity of the British; and Sir John Moore, on his part, was unaware both of the vicinity and great strength of the French.

On the 28th the position of the British became still more critical, for they retained much the same places, and the French had moved forward. <sup>Position on 28th.</sup>

Baird was still at Astorga waiting for his rear to close up.

Hope only marching over the Escorial pass, having halted for his rear.

Moore at Salamanca.

Napoleon at Aranda.

Lefebvre's corps, with a strong force of cavalry, was at Palencia and Valladolid, and had patrols close to Arevalo. Some French troops were also at Segovia.

On this date despatches reached both Moore and Hope, informing them of Napoleon's approach, and of his victories over the Spaniards; and it became evident to Moore that his position was one of great peril. He therefore ordered Baird to fall back at once towards Corunna or Vigo; and resolved himself —after endeavouring to effect his junction with Hope —to retreat into Portugal. <sup>Moore determines to retreat.</sup>

The situation of Hope was very critical. If he advanced, he would have to make a flank movement of three days, with a heavy convoy, over a flat country, and most probably in presence of a powerful cavalry. If he delayed, the French corps would <sup>Critical situation of Hope.</sup>

attack him; and if he retreated he would leave Moore at Salamanca without artillery or ammunition. The latter consideration outweighed all others, and without hesitation he pushed on, and by taking some bye roads, succeeded in gaining Avila, across country, without being molested by the French, eventually reaching Sir John Moore in safety.

Moore's determination to retreat created very general indignation in Spain. Madrid was said to be making a desperate stand against Napoleon; and the reports of the resistance of that city, which were, as we know, entirely without truth, caused him to change his plans. Baird's retreat was counter-ordered; and, as the enemy had passed on towards Madrid, and seemed entirely occupied with the Spaniards, Moore determined to make a bold attempt to concentrate with Baird at Valladolid, and then to threaten the French flank and line of supplies in the direction of Burgos.

Moore now resolves to advance on Valladolid, but prepares for a retreat on Corunna.

He therefore sent fresh orders to Baird to advance, but at the same time, as he saw he might be compelled to retire, made preparations for a retreat towards either Corunna or Vigo, by directing magazines to be established at the points of Benevente, Astorga, and Lugo. On the 11th December he moved towards Valladolid, and on the 13th reached Toro and other points upon the river Duero, when an intercepted French despatch fell into his hands.

Reaches the Duero.

Hears of Napoleon's operations.

From this despatch he learnt that Madrid had fallen several days previously, and that the French Emperor was preparing to subdue the Spanish provinces and Portugal, by distributing his armies in every direction. Lefebre's corps had been passed on

through Madrid, and was already at Talavera on its road towards Lisbon; and another under Marshal Soult, was ordered (in the despatch) to move from the Carrion river, where it was then in position, upon Benevente, and thence against the province of Galicia. Moore learnt also from this despatch that the French had no idea whatever of his own proximity, and that Soult's corps was weak and comparatively isolated.

His chances of being able to accomplish much in the position he was in, were evidently very slight, but he determined, as the best course which lay open to him, to endeavour to surprise Soult's corps upon the Carrion. It was now finally settled that the army, if it fell back, should retreat by the roads through Galicia; transports were directed to sail up the coast towards Vigo; and Baird was ordered to move in the direction of Mayorga instead of Valladolid.

The concentration between Baird and Moore was accomplished successfully on the 20th December, near Mayorga, and the united force was then in numbers superior to the corps of Soult.

After his concentration Moore advanced without delay, and on the night of the 23rd was close to and preparing to attack Soult. The latter's position was apparently dangerous, but again an alteration had taken place in the situation of the troops under Napoleon, and in reality it was the British army that was running close to its destruction. Both Soult and Napoleon had become aware of the exposed situation of Moore. The former had urgently demanded reinforcements, and while waiting for them, was collecting

Determines  
to attack  
Soult.

Concentrates with  
Baird at  
Mayorga.

Soult and  
Napoleon  
prepare to  
surround  
Moore.

his troops together behind the Carrion; and the latter—having on the same day that Moore joined Baird (*i. e.* on the 20th) been informed of the British movements—had changed all his plans, and was endeavouring, with a surprising energy, to surround his enemy. Having ordered Soult (after being reinforced) to march on Astorga, and the corps at Talavera to move on Salamanca, he himself, with 50,000 men and 150 guns, left Madrid on the 22nd December; and although the Escorial pass was choked with snow and most difficult of passage, urged on his soldiers by walking himself at their head, and after a difficult march, characterized by indomitable energy, arrived, on the 26th, at Tordesillas on the Duero, cavalry scouts being pushed forward towards Benevente. He had thus in less than five days, in winter and across high mountains, traversed more than 100 miles of ground.

Rapid  
march of  
Napoleon.

Expects to  
destroy the  
British.

The destruction of the British he now considered as almost certain. From Tordesillas he wrote to Soult thus:—"our cavalry scouts are already at Benevente; if the English pass to-day in their position they are lost; if they attack you in force, retire a day's march; the farther they proceed, the better for us."

But he was some few hours too late. On that very day (the 26th) Moore, had retreated before Soult, and had crossed the river Esla. His army passed at different points—the main portion by a bridge near Benevente, which was afterwards destroyed—and the troops, during the operation, were attacked and harassed by the enemy's horsemen, who even carried off some baggage. To explain this

Retreat of  
Moore  
across the  
Esla.

movement of Moore's, it is sufficient to say that on the night of the 23rd (when he was almost in the presence of Soult, and was meditating an attack on the following morning), he had been informed of Napoleon's approach, and, by at once ordering a retreat, had saved his army.

The troops, when once across the Esla, delayed for a short time to collect together, to destroy some stores, and to clear out the magazine at Benevente, and then commenced a rapid retreat through Astorga towards Corunna; but this delay was sufficient to bring the head-quarters of Napoleon close to Benevente. The magazines had been but partially filled, food was scarce, and the situation of the British—having to retire pursued by the cavalry of the enemy—appeared to be desperate. Fortunately, however, a flood at the time caused the Esla to rise and become unfordable, and the French lost twenty-four hours before they could repair the destroyed bridge and pursue. It now became important for Moore to gain by forced marches the mountainous country beyond Astorga, where his army would be in comparative safety from cavalry; and the troops were for this reason hurried on with great celerity, the sick being left in rear, and a quantity of stores destroyed. These forced marches, the want of regular supplies, the inclement weather, and above all, the sense of almost running before the enemy, combined to shake the discipline of the army. Excesses and insubordination became general, and the "Retreat to Corunna" was at first marked by great disorder. Napoleon pursued incessantly, and on the 1st of January, 1809, arrived at Astorga. Here, however, he received a despatch

Falls back  
towards  
Astorga.

Pursuit of  
Napoleon.

Sudden  
departure  
of the latter  
for France.

disclosing to him some preparations for war on the part of Austria, and at once turning back, set off for France, taking with him a large portion of his army, and entrusting the pursuit of the British to a corps under Soult.

Soult con-  
tinues the  
pursuit.

It is sufficient to say, that against this corps Moore showed a bold front, making a stand at Lugo and other points, and that this restored the spirit of the troops. The retreat became more orderly, and at last, after great hardships, the British force arrived at Corunna; a small portion of it having been detached, during the retreat, by Orense upon Vigo, and the transports ordered up from the latter place to Corunna. In consequence of contrary winds, these transports did not appear off Corunna until three days after Sir John Moore's army had arrived there; but at last they sailed into the harbour, and the troops began to embark. A portion only were on board, when Soult attacked the remainder, and thus brought on the battle of Corunna (16th January, 1809). In this battle Sir John Moore was killed, and Baird severely wounded, but the French, though superior in numbers, were driven back, and the British embarking in safety, left the shores of Spain.

Battle of  
Corunna,  
death of  
Moore, and  
embark-  
ation of  
the British  
army.

#### REMARKS.

This cam-  
paign an  
illustration  
of a double  
line of  
operations.

In this campaign the British army was advancing by a "*double line of operations*," for the cavalry and artillery under Hope were merely a part or detachment of Moore's force, and the army was divided into only two portions, which were complete in them-



selves, viz., those under Moore and Baird. These two portions were moving from Lisbon and Corunna, points widely separated from one another, and *Salamanca* had been fixed upon as the point of concentration, at which they were to unite.

Bearing all this in mind let us consider the position of the British and French armies on the 28th November. Separated position of British Army, on 28th Nov.

On that day, Baird was at Astorga, *five* marches from Salamanca, with his rear not yet closed up.

Hope was at the Escorial Pass, *six* marches from Salamanca.

Lefebvre's powerful corps was—part at *Valladolid*, only *three*\* *marches* from Salamanca, and part at Palencia—and had pushed out patrols almost to Arevalo. Some French were also at Segovia.

Moore was at Salamanca.

Thus a considerable portion of the French army was on this day actually much nearer to Salamanca than the British; and moreover there is no doubt that had Napoleon been aware in time of the British movement he could have concentrated by this day a very powerful force (out of the overwhelming army which he led) at the point of Valladolid, and could then have fallen upon Sir John Moore at Salamanca, before either Baird could have Danger that they were incurring.

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\* The distances in marches are taken from 'Napier,' upon whose authority we can rely. It required, it appears, twice as long to reach Salamanca from the Escorial Pass as from Valladolid, although the distance as the crow flies is not much further from the former place than from the latter. The nature of the country would account for this. This fact is an illustration of the necessity in military operations of considering distances in relation to the time it takes to march over them, and not according to the mere number of miles.

joined him, or Sir J. Hope with his artillery, cavalry, and ammunition, have arrived. Moore's portion of the force might thus have been attacked by resistless numbers, and possibly captured or destroyed; and had it been so, the fate of the artillery and baggage under Sir J. Hope could hardly have been doubtful.

Thus, we see, that all three of the separated fractions of the British army were in the greatest danger of being attacked at a serious disadvantage. Napoleon's ignorance of their position saved them; but it was a mere chance that he was thus ignorant, and the evident hazard which they incurred is sufficient to illustrate very strongly the wisdom of the rule of war on page (34), and which we give again here, viz., that when an army is separated into portions, each of which is not strong enough to cope alone with the enemy, it is essential that the point of *concentration should be so chosen that the portions cannot be attacked by the enemy before their union has taken place.*

As to the choice of a point of concentration.

Salamanca was not, under the circumstances of the French position, a safe point of concentration to have chosen. It would not be right also, except under exceptionally urgent circumstances, to isolate a detachment from its main body—as Hope's detachment was—so that it is exposed to be attacked by a stronger force before succour can arrive.

No blame attaching to Moore for the British position on the 28th.

Under ordinary circumstances, great blame would attach to the leader of an army who had placed it in such a position as that held by the British on the 28th November; but in this particular instance, none can be imputed to Sir John Moore. The British

government had sent Baird's force to Corunna, and had ordered Moore to join it, and to aid the Spaniards. He had the choice of but two alternatives; either to unite his own troops to those of Baird by sea (which would have caused additional delay), or advance as he did. He had no intelligence when he set out from Lisbon of the passage of Napoleon's immense army over the Pyrenees, but had heard only how large Spanish forces were facing the French, under Joseph, upon the Ebro; and that the Spanish people were occupying Madrid, and full of confidence. He had every reason to believe that he could concentrate with Baird in safety at Salamanca. With regard to the separation of the cavalry and artillery under Hope, it should be remembered that Moore had been assured, on all sides, that guns could not move upon the roads N. of the Tagus—subsequently it was discovered that they might have done so, but only with very great difficulty.

In fact nobody could have been expected to have foreseen the events which had taken place. It could not have been supposed that within a month the confident Spanish armies, scattered to the winds, would be flying in every direction; and that Napoleon, with his immense forces, would be close to Madrid, and have taken it in two days. The weakness of the Spaniards, and the strength and skill of the enemy, had in fact baffled all ordinary calculations.

In reading military books, it is very common to meet with the expression, that a general had the advantage of "*Interior lines*." This is merely a technical way of saying that he could, by reason of his occupying a central or interior position with re-

Meaning of  
"Interior  
lines."

gard to the points held by his enemy, bring a larger force against some one or other of these points, than the enemy could there collect in time to oppose him.

Lefebvre, for example, when about Valladolid on the 28th Nov., had (though without knowing it) the advantage of "Interior lines" over Moore, for he could have attacked the latter with a superior force at Salamanca, before either Sir John Hope, or Sir David Baird could have succoured him.

When Moore (after he had discovered that the French knew nothing of his position, and were intent only upon Madrid), determined to advance towards Valladolid (*see* p. 44), and threaten their line of communication, he acted upon a daring plan; but, it should be noticed, that he combined prudence with daring, in ordering magazines to be formed at Benevente, Astorga, and Lugo, so that he might, in case of necessity, by sending his ships round to some spot (such as Corunna) upon the coast of Galicia, make that point instead of Lisbon his "*Base*" from which his supplies might be forwarded, or to which he could in extremity retreat. The wisdom of this precaution was exemplified when Napoleon subsequently cut him off from Portugal.

Moore's  
change of  
base.

Moore's *Base* was then changed from Lisbon to Corunna, and the army was saved by retiring upon this line—the magazines which had been provided contributing to its sustenance. To be able thus to change a Base in war is an evident advantage to a general; it gives him a great degree of independence, and multiplies the directions in which he can with safety act against the enemy. It is, however, comparatively seldom that such a change can be made.

The command of the sea, in this instance, rendered it possible.

When, after reaching the river Dueño, Dec. 13th, Moore (on his way to concentrate with Baird at Valladolid) became aware—through the intercepted despatch—of the exact situation of the enemy; of the position of Soult upon the Carrion; of Lefebvre's corps being at Talavera; and of the fall of Madrid, he showed both resolution and ability in determining to attack Soult. The corps at Talavera was nearer to Lisbon than he was, and had already cut him off from a *safe* retreat into Portugal. It was now evident that he must shortly fall back upon his other line of retreat, viz. :—upon Corunna, or some such point in Galicia, and that he could not hope to make any *lengthened* stand against the large armies of Napoleon. Had he, consulting prudence alone, decided to retire at once, the position of his army would have fully borne him out in taking such a step. Indeed, had the attack upon Soult been determined upon with the mere view of crippling or destroying that corps, and then immediately retreating, the object would hardly have justified the probable loss of men and the risk to the army; but there was *a greater intention* than this in the attack. By its direction alone, it was *menacing to the French communications*, and it was designed to draw Napoleon, if possible, from the south, and to turn the corps at Talavera from its march towards Lisbon; thus saving at all events for a time both Andalusia and Portugal from invasion. This able stroke fully succeeded. It is probable that the bold and unexpected nature of the act made Napoleon suppose that the British forces

His great  
motive for  
attacking  
Soult.

His com-  
plete  
success.

were more numerous than they were ; but he certainly *arrested the movement of all his corps*, turned that at Talavera towards the north, and marched at once in great haste and with an overwhelming force against Moore. He was thus, by this *threatened attack upon his line of supplies*, drawn away from the richest provinces of Spain ; and, as he shortly afterwards set out for Austria (having had no time to carry out his plans, and leaving the conduct of the war in other and less gifted hands) the value of this counter-stroke to the Peninsula was more than temporary.

Object of  
the direc-  
tion of  
Napoleon's  
march on  
Tordesillas.

The direction of Napoleon's march, when he set out from Madrid against Moore should be particularly noticed. It was a struggle *to cut off the British general from his communications*, and to interpose between him and his lines of retreat, both to Lisbon and Corunna. He therefore went straight towards Tordesillas and Benevente. At the former point he had cut Moore off from Salamanca (and Lisbon) ; and it became, as it were, a race between him and his adversary for the point of Benevente. If Napoleon had gained Benevente *before* Moore, he would then have been nearer to Corunna than the latter. He was a few hours too late ; and the English army slipped out of his hand.

—on Bene-  
vente.

It should be noticed, that the mountainous country of Galicia, though increasing the hardships of the retreat, was yet favourable to Moore. It was to gain the difficult ground between the Minho and the Sil that he at first forced the march of his army from Astorga ; and when he had entered this country, the narrow mountain gorges offered positions where he



could retard the pursuit of larger numbers, and in which the French cavalry were almost valueless. These, however, could all be turned by more or less long détours, so that a *permanent* resistance in them was impossible.

There are, in addition to the points already touched upon, some general ones brought prominently out in this campaign. For instance, the inconvenience and even danger to an army, caused by a deficiency of supplies and transport, as illustrated in the delays at the commencement of the campaign, in consequence of a want of money and stores; and in the dangerous lengthening out of the columns under Moore, Baird, and Hope, caused by a scarcity of carriage. Nothing ties an army down by the leg so completely as a want of stores or transport. It cannot move until it gets them. It is the same thing now as it was in the days of Moore, and the defeat of the French in the recent war (1870-1) may be fairly ascribed to their being found when war broke out unequal to the task of rapidly supplying and moving their army.

The difficulty of obtaining accurate information regarding an enemy's position in time of war is shown. The Spanish peasantry, though indolent and apathetic, were as a body certainly friends to the British; and yet we see that the first intelligence which Sir John Moore (less than 150 miles from Madrid) received of the capture of that city, reached him through an enemy's intercepted despatch, some nine days after the city had fallen. An intelligence department (*i. e.*, a department organised for the sole purpose of obtaining information) has always been a

Difficulties  
caused by  
want of  
supplies,  
&c.

Difficulty of  
obtaining  
accurate  
informa-  
tion.

necessity to an army. Telegraphs, railways, steamers, and other means of quickly transmitting intelligence, have not altered this. The Austrians at Koeniggrätz, in 1866, and MacMahon at Wörth, in 1870, were both completely ignorant of the near neighbourhood of large bodies of the enemy.

Influence of  
accidental  
circum-  
stances in  
war.

There are two or three examples also of the influence which purely accidental circumstances have in war. The interception of the French despatch, which arose, by the way, merely in consequence of the officer who carried it having quarrelled with the post-master of a village about post-horses, and been killed in the brawl—the flooding of the Esla—the news from Austria arriving just in time to turn Napoleon back from Astorga—all these matters bore most importantly upon the final result of the operations.

Extraor-  
dinary  
march of  
Napoleon.

As an instance of an extraordinary march, that of Napoleon from Madrid to Astorga is almost without parallel. In ten days he marched his 50,000 men 200 miles, crossing a mountain range by a pass covered with snow, and out of this time a whole day was lost at the river Esla. To march a large army in a campaign nearly 23 miles a day, and to feed it, for several days in succession, in bad weather, is a very difficult feat of war.

Situation of  
affairs  
at the  
conclusion  
of this  
campaign.

The retreat from Corunna caused much despondency in England, and Sir John Moore's conduct of the campaign was at first loudly blamed, but his memory has since been done justice to. He had

accomplished all that, under the circumstances, was possible for Spain, in turning Napoleon from his march towards Andalusia and Portugal, and had saved his own army from destruction.

After the embarkation of Moore's force, the ships were scattered by a storm, and the troops reached England in great distress. Only a few thousand English soldiers now remained in the Peninsula [chiefly in Portugal, about Lisbon], and the French over-ran all the northern and central parts of Spain. They took Saragossa after a protracted and heroic defence, and although the Spaniards held out in many of the fortified towns and mountain districts, their numbers left little room for hope that the subjugation of the entire country could be long averted.

Still the struggle was not abandoned, and Sir Arthur Wellesley was again sent to Portugal.

## LECTURE IV.

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### CAMPAIGN AGAINST SOULT—1809.

Sir A.  
Wellesley  
lands in  
Portugal.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY landed, for the second time, in Portugal, on the 22nd April, 1809, more than three months after the embarkation of Sir John Moore's army at Corunna, and assumed command of the allied forces. In this interval the situation of affairs in the Peninsula had undergone great changes, and alterations had taken place in the relative circumstances and positions of the various armies, and it is necessary for us before continuing our narrative of the war to trace briefly the nature and extent of these changes upon both sides.

Changed  
position of  
affairs since  
Corunna—

The situation of the French had become greatly altered.

1st. with  
regard to  
French.

Napoleon, though he had left the Peninsula for France, still endeavoured to carry on from a distance the operations of his army in Spain; and for this reason the French marshals who were in command of the various corps composing it were permitted to correspond directly with him, transmitting their despatches through the minister of war in France. But at the same time that they were thus made in a

great measure independent of any authority but that of Napoleon, who was far removed from them, they were placed nominally under the supreme command of Joseph, the Emperor's brother, who had returned to Madrid, and to whom instructions were imparted as to the future conduct of the war.

The French force in Spain had been somewhat diminished by the troops which Napoleon had taken away with him, when he turned back from Astorga towards France, but it was still very large; and after deductions had been made for the garrisons of important places, and for detachments to guard the communications, about 100,000 men were available for field operations in the distant parts of the Peninsula.

Out of this force three French armies were set apart for the subjugation of Portugal and Andalusia, including the reduction of the cities of Lisbon, Seville, and Cadiz. These far outnumbered the handful of allied troops which at the conclusion of the Corunna campaign was still left in Portugal, concentrated principally about Lisbon. These three armies were—

Marshal Soult, in Galicia.

General Lapisse, at Salamanca.

Marshal Victor, near Talavera.

Distribution of their troops.

The plan of campaign which they were directed to carry out was as follows:—

Plan of Campaign.

Soult was to invade Portugal from the north, capture Oporto, and then march upon Lisbon.

At the same time that Soult left Oporto, Lapisse was to set out from Salamanca, and, by following the road through Ciudad-Rodrigo to Abrantes, clear the country upon his left flank.

Victor was to move upon Merida, taking with him a siege train for the subsequent reduction of Cadiz.

It was not supposed that Soult would find any difficulty in reducing Lisbon unaided; but should he do so, Victor was to assist him from Merida, and after the capture of the Portuguese capital, Lapisse and Victor, joining together, were to march into Andalusia, to conquer that province.

Joseph was in readiness with a large force at Madrid, to strengthen or succour any corps which might require it.

Had this combination been rapidly carried out, the Allies in Portugal could hardly have resisted it; but it was not so carried out.

Invasion of  
the N. of  
Portugal  
by Soult.

Soult could not march as soon as ordered, for he had many men in hospital; his gun-carriages required repair; his ammunition was running short; his soldiers were in want of shoes and equipment generally; and he had little money. At last, however, he was able to set out; and leaving a force under Marshal Ney in Galicia, to hold that province, moved towards Vigo. The rainy season was now at its height, and muddy roads and swollen streams retarded his progress. Having passed through Vigo and Tuy, and left garrisons in those places to preserve his communication with Galicia, he attempted to cross the Minho near its mouth. In this attempt he did not succeed, for the river was a raging torrent, and some Portuguese militia opposing his passage, he was compelled to make a détour to Orense, whence he descended upon Chaves, where he established a hospital and dépôt. From this point he moved by Braga on Oporto, and after some bloody contests with the



Portuguese troops and peasantry, captured that city on the 29th March.

Captures  
Oporto,  
29th  
March.

It had been expected that he would have reached this place several weeks earlier; and Victor and Lapisse, having had no intelligence of his movements, had remained in comparative inactivity. Soult, also, when he reached Oporto, could obtain no news of Victor or Lapisse, and as his troops had undergone great fatigue, and the feeling and discipline of his army was not very good, he halted in that city, hesitating to advance further.

Thus the French marshals, for different reasons, acted undecidedly; and kept waiting for one another, instead of pushing forward with energy. It was about this time also that they first began to give evidence of a wish to evade the authority of Joseph and of the existence of a jealous feeling among themselves. This feeling must be mentioned, for it contributed very largely to mar the success of many of their operations. Left to a great extent in independent command by Napoleon, and ranking, with some justice, the military talents of Joseph beneath their own, these marshals frequently remonstrated against the latter's decisions, and found pretexts for neglecting his orders. Ambitious too of personal distinction, they were reluctant to serve under one another (thus occupying a subordinate position) for the common good. Combined operations were from this cause difficult to carry out, each marshal having often a private reason for obstructing them; and as a result of this want of union, and also of the difficulty of procuring information in a hostile country, the French armies moved slowly and without concert.

Jealous  
feeling  
among the  
French  
marshals.

Their hesi-  
tating  
movements.

From the causes detailed above, they were no farther advanced at the date of Sir Arthur Wellesley's landing than they had been some weeks earlier, and the corps of Soult had been placed in an isolated and embarrassing position.

At this date (22nd April, 1809) they held the following positions:—

Their position at date of Sir A. Wellesley's arrival.

Soult, about 20,000, still at Oporto, but the Spanish and Portuguese insurgents had closed upon his rear, and taken Vigo, containing the military chest, and Chaves with its magazines.

A part of his force (under General Loison) had just been detached to Amarante, on the river Tamega, to keep open the road to Braganza, which crosses the river at that point. It was an object to Soult that this especial line of retreat should be kept open, for feeling unsafe with regard to his position, and despairing of reaching Lisbon, he began to meditate a move by Braganza, towards Salamanca and Ciudad-Rodrigo, whence he could more readily communicate with Victor.

Victor and Lapisse, were both near Merida, having *united together*; for the former had refused to advance until the latter had been ordered by Joseph to join him from Salamanca. They numbered jointly about 30,000 men, Victor being in command.

Narrative reverts to the Allies. Their changed circumstances since Corunna.

It is now time to sketch the changes which had taken place in the situation of the British and their Allies.

When the victories of Napoleon over the Spaniards, the retreat of Sir John Moore to Corunna, and the

approach of the French armies towards Portugal, became known in rapid succession in the latter country, consternation was at first general. The forts on the Tagus were dismantled, so that the French might not bring guns to bear from them upon the sea, and the British troops concentrated for instant embarkation at Lisbon.

But as time went on, and the French did not approach, preparations were made for resistance. The Portuguese requested that British officers might be appointed to the higher commissions in their army, and a British general nominated to lead it. Their request was readily acceded to, and a disciplined and organized force, commanded by Marshal Beresford, and of which each battalion was placed under a British officer, was soon in the field.

The militia was called out; volunteer corps were enrolled; and the peasantry armed themselves in great numbers. Reinforcements (consisting of British troops and some German auxiliaries), were also sent from England, and the wrecks of the Spanish armies, which had suffered continual reverses and been driven south of the Tagus, began again to collect under arms.

The allied forces then, at the date of Sir Arthur Wellesley's landing, held the following positions:—

The British (including German auxiliaries) 25,000 strong, were at Leiria.

Their position at the date of Sir A. Wellesley's arrival.

Beresford's Portuguese troops, 16,000, about Thomar.

The Portuguese militia and levies,—numbering a few thousands,—principally in the north of Portugal, observing Soult.

The Spanish troops were assembling in numbers, under General Cuesta, to the southward of Merida, and also under Venegas near Carolina.

Sir A. Wellesley determines to advance against Soult.

After his arrival in Portugal, Sir Arthur Wellesley had to decide against which of the French marshals (*i.e.*, Soult or Victor) to advance, and he determined to march against Soult; but in order to provide for the safety of Lisbon during his absence, he sent a small force to Abrantes and Alcantara, and gave directions—(1), that if Victor, moving northward, should endeavour to cross the Tagus and follow the road on the right bank to Lisbon, the bridges were to be destroyed and his progress opposed; (2) that if the marshal, on the other hand, should advance by Badajoz, the force at Abrantes was to fall back on Lisbon, and Cuesta with the Spaniards follow him in rear.

Allied army concentrates at Coimbra, and moves forward.

Sir Arthur Wellesley had supreme command of the British and Portuguese, and he incorporated some of Beresford's Portuguese battalions in each British brigade, leaving the remainder under the personal command of that marshal. Provisions were sent round to the mouth of the Mondego, and the allies moved forward.

On the 5th of May the army was concentrated at Coimbra, and advanced without delay to carry out the following plan of campaign, arranged by Sir Arthur.

General plan of operations.

Beresford, with 6,000 Portuguese marching by Viseu and Lamego, was to move towards Amarante (*see* Map II., Pl. I.), while Sir Arthur himself, with the remainder of the army, 20,000 strong, endeavoured to pass the Duero near Oporto. The object of de-

taching Beresford was, that he might, having gained a position on the right bank of that river, draw off the attention of the French from Sir Arthur, and also by cutting off Soult from Braganza, force him northwards into Galicia, and thus completely separate him from Victor.

Sir Arthur Wellesley's troops met the advanced posts of Soult some miles south of the Duero, skirmished with them, and drove them across that river. Soult now concentrated upon the right bank, principally about Oporto, and having gained sufficient time to destroy the only bridge (a floating one) which existed, and to bring over all the boats which he could find to his own side of the stream, considered himself safe, and merely watched the Duero at its mouth, imagining that the British might attempt to cross in that direction by means of their ships.

Soult concentrates behind the Duero.

Sir Arthur had no facilities with his army for throwing a bridge over the Duero, which, opposite Oporto, was very rapid, and about 300 yards wide; but yet it was essential for him to pass the river at once, for Soult was already making preparations for a retreat towards Braganza, and might fall upon Beresford with overpowering numbers. While reconnoitring Soult's position, Sir Arthur had been informed that a ford existed at Avintas, about three miles further up the river. He had, moreover, observed that the French watch above Oporto was a careless one, and by good fortune an officer of his staff had discovered a small skiff on the left bank, and crossing in it unperceived, had managed to find and bring over to the allied side three large barges.

Sir Arthur reconnoitres Soult's position.

By turning to Map II., Pl. 2, it will be seen that

Description  
of the  
Duero—its  
banks, &c.  
—near  
Oporto.

the Duero close above Oporto takes a sharp bend round some prominent rocky ground, on the left bank, called the Serra Rock, and that opposite to this rock on the right bank is an isolated building called the Seminary. Sir Arthur had noticed that from the Serra Rock he could sweep the opposite bank with his guns, and that its position hid the passage of the barges [at the dotted line in the map] from the French in Oporto. He noticed also that the Seminary was a strong building capable of holding two battalions, and while easily accessible from the river, was surrounded by a high wall on its other three sides. Under these circumstances he collected his troops with secrecy behind the Serra Rock, placed eighteen guns in battery on its summit, and sent General Murray with one brigade to Avintas, with orders to seek for and send down more boats, and then to pass at that point himself, if possible.

Intelligence was soon brought to him that Murray had found boats, and upon the receipt of this Sir Arthur proceeded to carry out one of the most daring passages of a river on record.

Passage of  
the Duero.

#### PASSAGE OF THE DUERO.

Sending an officer and twenty-five men across to the Seminary in one of the barges, he reinforced them as quickly as possible, and three boat loads had got across before Soult took the alarm. Then the French streaming out from Oporto bore down upon the Seminary, and endeavoured to carry it by storm, but the English guns now swept the left of the building, and confined the assault to but one side of it, where the musketry of the defenders drove the



French back. In the meantime the inhabitants of Oporto came over to the left bank with several great boats, and General Sherbrooke with the Guards, crossing the river in them opposite Oporto, entered the city, passed through it, and took the French in rear, while in the other direction Murray's force soon appeared in sight, coming from Avintas. The French, surprised on all sides, and afraid of being cut off by Murray from the road to Amarante, were thrown into confusion; and at length, ceasing all resistance, and abandoning their sick and 50 guns in Oporto, they succeeded in making good their retreat in great disorder past Murray's force towards Amarante. The panic was so great among them, that one squadron of the 14th dragoons, under Major Hervey, succeeded with little loss in cutting its way through three battalions of infantry marching in a hollow road; and so complete a surprise was the passage of the Duero, that Sir Arthur Wellesley sat down in Oporto at Soult's quarters to the dinner which had been prepared for the French Marshal.

The situation of Soult's army was now very critical. The only roads *practicable for guns* by which he could retreat were two in number, and led through Amarante—one (by Guimarens) upon Braga, the other upon Chaves. The British from Oporto could, if they marched northward at once, reach Braga before him by a more direct route, and the Portuguese already held Chaves.

It was even now doubtful whether he could succeed in saving his baggage and artillery; but when, after a few hours' march, he was informed that Loison had retreated from Amarante, and that Beresford was in

Surprise of  
Soult.

He retreats  
towards  
Amarante.

Danger of  
his po-  
sition.

Beresford

occupies  
Amarante.

Soult des-  
troys his  
guns, and  
escapes  
over the  
mountains.

Sir Arthur's  
measures  
for the  
pursuit of  
Soult.

Soult, elud-  
ing the  
Allies,  
reaches  
Salamonde.

Danger  
which he  
was still in,  
and the  
chances of  
escape open  
to him.

occupation of that point, he saw that his chance was desperate. From that moment his sole aim was to save his men; and so, destroying all his artillery, baggage, and ammunition, he took in haste to the mountain paths over the Sierra Catalina on his left, and by following them reached Guimarens, where he was joined by Loison. Thence (still keeping to the mountains) he made for Carvalho Este, his object being to avoid both Braga and Chaves, and strike up northward through Salamonde, where he would enter the high road to Montalegre. Sir Arthur, in the meantime, had ordered Beresford, (whom he supposed, —as was the case,—to be at Amarante,) to move upon Chaves, in order to cut Soult off should he attempt to take that road; and Murray, whose movements after crossing at Avintas had been rather slow and undecided, to make for Guimarens. He himself halted two days at Oporto, and then pushed on to Braga.

On the 15th Sir Arthur was at Braga, Murray at Guimarens, and Beresford near Chaves, the latter having upon his march detached some Portuguese to occupy Ruivaens. The capture of Soult now appeared certain; but the French general, on the 16th, came out from the mountains at the point of Salamonde, passing between his pursuers, and eluding both Sir Arthur and Beresford.

Still his chances of final escape were but slender. From Salamonde there were only two lines of retreat into Galicia; one by Ruivaens to Montalegre, the other by Ponte Nova to Montalegre, the latter passing by a narrow bridge over the mountain torrent of the Cavado, which runs in a deep defile. Soult learnt

that the bridge near Ruivaens had been broken by the Portuguese, and so made for that of Ponte Nova, and was fortunate enough to find this still uncut. He had, however, to fight for his passage over it with the Portuguese peasantry, and after this to force his way across a second bridge, over a deep gulf, and so narrow that only three persons could pass abreast. While traversing this, the English guns, coming up with Sir Arthur from Braga, opened upon his rear, and the French, utterly demoralised and panic-stricken, and crowding together upon the bridge, forced each other in utter terror into the gulf below, losing very many men.

British  
under Sir  
Arthur  
appear in  
his rear.

Thus fighting, and enduring the extreme of every kind of misery and hardship, Soult held upon his way, narrowly avoiding complete destruction, but yet escaping finally with the bulk of his men from the Allies, and reaching Montalegre in safety, which place (although Beresford had reached Chaves—one march off—in pursuit on the 17th, and his troops early on the 18th), he passed through on the 18th without opposition. The pursuit beyond this point was not at all actively kept up, and Soult, with the greater part of his army, gained Orense, and afterwards Lugo, where he was joined by Ney, "being at this time," says Jomini, "in a far worse condition than General Moore six months earlier."

He escapes,  
however,  
finally and  
reaches  
Montalegre,  
and after-  
wards  
Lugo.

Immediately after this success against Soult, Sir Arthur was obliged to return at once to Abrantes, as Victor and Lapisse had moved forward, and succeeded, in spite of a gallant resistance, in forcing the passage of the Tagus at Alcantara, where the bridge

Sir A.  
Wellesley  
returns  
towards  
Abrantes.

French —a very old Roman one, and of great strength—was  
 retreat out partially blown up.  
 of Portugal.

Upon the approach of the English general, Victor retired to Talavera, removing the bridge (composed of boats) at Almaraz, and thus Sir Arthur Wellesley had for the second time freed Portugal from the French.

Having  
 freed Por-  
 tugal, Sir  
 Arthur is  
 again ready  
 to take  
 the field.

The defence of the northern parts of Portugal was now entrusted to the Portuguese levies, Beresford was sent to Ciudad-Rodrigo, and Sir Arthur, after a month's delay to reorganise his army and procure some money, was again ready to take the field.

#### REMARKS.

The reason why Sir Arthur Wellesley advanced against Soult in preference to Victor should be understood. He had, in deciding against which of the two marshals to move, to balance the following considerations;

Relative  
 advantages  
 of operating  
 against  
 Victor or  
 Soult.

Victor, both from his position and numerical strength, threatened Lisbon more than Soult, and a victory over him, by freeing Lisbon from immediate danger, and by liberating the south of Spain, would be of greater value than a success in the north.

On the other hand, by the recall of Lapisse, Soult had been left entirely isolated, and the recovery of Oporto and of the rich country about the Duero (whence the army could obtain supplies) would raise the spirit of the Portuguese, and be of material advantage to the army. The British also might be almost certain of being able, before their march would be made known to Victor, of arriving close to the Duero, while Victor at Merida was a long way from

Lisbon;—there was thus a probability that should he move from his position, time would be given for a successful attack against Soult, and the return of the army to oppose him.

The passage of the Duero is not to be considered as a mere instance of good fortune attendant upon hazardous daring. The carelessness of Soult mainly contributed to the complete success of the enterprise, and emboldened Sir Arthur Wellesley to attempt it; but it was *not until Sir Arthur had become aware of Murray's passage* higher up the Duero at Avintas, and of his having found boats, that he ordered his own troops to cross in the barges. This fact should be especially noticed. He knew then that Murray would shortly support him, and his acquaintance with the courage of his soldiers, fully justified him in believing that until that time they could hold out. The fire of the artillery from the left bank would aid them in doing so; the Seminary was a strong building; and while they occupied it the enemy could not see or interfere with the passage.

Had Sir Arthur moved his whole army to cross at Avintas, its march would have been discovered. Had he left the portion that did cross there to advance unaided, it must have been overwhelmed and driven back. By the combined passages the French were deceived, a mutual support was secured, and a brilliant success realized.

General Murray is censured by military writers for want of talent and boldness, in not pressing more rapidly from Avintas upon Soult's columns when they were retreating upon the Amarante road. Had

Skill exhibited in the passage of the Duero.

Errors in Murray's movements.

he fallen upon them in front while Sir A. Wellesley's troops pressed them in rear, the complete rout of the French must have ensued. The opportunity offered to him, says Napier, "might have tempted a blind man. How would his want of hardihood have appeared if Loison had maintained Amarante? Soult would then have reached Zamora or Salamanca in good order, and have turned on Ciudad-Rodrigo, perhaps have taken it, and would certainly have occupied the British army on that side." This failure upon Murray's part was, however, less serious in its consequences to the Allies, on account of the seizure of Amarante by Beresford.

The delay of Sir Arthur Wellesley [with the main body of the Allies] for two days in Oporto, before pursuing Soult; and the failure of the Allies to intercept the French, either at Salamonde or Montalegre, and so cut them off from Galicia, requires explanation.

Explanation of the delay of Sir Arthur Wellesley at Oporto.

The delay at Oporto arose from many causes. The army had already marched eighty miles in four days, skirmishing constantly with the enemy, and the men and animals were exhausted. It had outmarched its ammunition, provisions, and baggage; and the artillery and stores of all kinds, had to be brought from the left to the right bank of the Duero. Sir Arthur, also, was unaware of the exact position of Beresford, and could not tell whether Soult, if he secured his retreat through Amarante, would take the direction of Braga or that of Chaves. If he had pursued Soult with his whole force along the narrow road to Amarante, hemmed in between the Sierra Catalina and the Duero, he must have merely fol-



lowed that marshal (who could move as rapidly as himself) in one column; and he therefore preferred to trust to Murray and Beresford to press upon and intercept the French; while he himself, as soon as he could gain certain intelligence of the direction taken by them, would, by forced marches, endeavour to cut them off either at Braga or Chaves. In the meantime he could give his troops rest, which they stood much in need of, and get over his artillery supplies and stores.

Napier points out that Beresford, had he acted with greater rapidity, might have forestalled Soult, both at Salamonde and Montalegre. He states that Beresford, when he left Amarante (to move towards Chaves, to cut off Soult, according to the orders sent him by Sir A. Wellesley,) had an excellent map of the country to consult, and should have detached a force to occupy Salamonde, seeing the importance of that point, and that there was a direct road (through Freixim) upon it. Beresford is also blamed for not having taken more certain measures *to insure the destruction* of the bridge at Ponte Nova, and the second narrow one over which Soult got with so much difficulty. One of his staff officers had, it seems, attempted, with some Portuguese, to destroy the bridge at Ponte Nova, but he had not means at his disposal to accomplish it in time. Again, as Soult only passed through Montalegre on the 18th, and Beresford's troops were at Chaves *early* on the 17th (one march from Montalegre), the latter might have reached the point of Montalegre in time to intercept the French.

Remarks as  
to Beres-  
ford's  
operations.

The great importance in this campaign of the Importance

of the  
points of  
Amarante,  
Salamonde,  
and Montalegre.

points of Amarante, Salamonde and Montalegre is to be noticed (*see* the definition of important and decisive "strategical points," page (75).

When Sir Arthur Wellesley directed Beresford to cross the Duero at Lamego, and endeavour to intercept Soult's line of retreat through Braganza, the position of Amarante (where the road from Oporto to Braganza crosses the Tamega), rendered it of great strategical importance. By its occupation, and the destruction of the bridge over the river, Beresford could close this line of retreat to Soult, and it was thus, even at the beginning of the campaign, "an important strategical point." But at this period of the operation it could not be termed a "decisive" one, for Soult had *another line of retreat* open to him (*viz.*, that by Braza), and so the possession of Amarante could not drive him to extremity.

After Sir Arthur Wellesley, however, had surprised Soult by the passage of the Duero at Oporto, *cut him off from the direct road to Braga*, and forced him into that between the Sierra Catalina and the Duero, which led through Amarante, then the point of Amarante became a "decisive" one. Soult's sole chance of saving his artillery, baggage or ammunition (that is, of avoiding a ruinous disaster), was that it should be held against the Allies; and when the troops at Amarante retreated before Beresford, the fate of the French was sealed. Sir Arthur Wellesley, by having secured Amarante, crippled his adversary, and decided the campaign.

Error of the  
French in  
abandon-  
ing it.

Loison, the commander of the force which Soult had detached to hold this point, does not appear to have appreciated fully the value of his position, but

to have retired before Beresford after a feeble resistance. He should, under the circumstances, have fought for the post, even to the extremity of self-sacrifice; and when he abandoned it "he relinquished (says Napier) all claim to military reputation."

When Soult in his retreat was making for the point of Salamonde, and afterwards Montalegre, each of these points became in succession *decisive strategical points*; for upon his passing through them, or failing to do so, depended the question of the safety or nearly complete destruction of his army.

We should notice what a marked influence the topography of the country exercised upon the campaign. If it had not been for the mountainous character of the country north of the Duero, and the absence of many roads across it, Soult might have escaped with all his artillery and equipment, instead of having to fly in distress and disorder before Wellesley, and only saving his men with difficulty. The necessity, before approaching any campaign, of making oneself as minutely acquainted as possible with the theatre of operations is forcibly illustrated, and the strictures which have been passed upon Beresford for not having seen by the map the important points of the country, and occupied them upon his own responsibility,—though still carrying out Sir Arthur's orders to march towards Chaves,—show what officers commanding troops in war may expect to be held responsible for in this respect.

Influence of  
the topo-  
graphy of  
the country  
upon this  
campaign.

## LECTURE V.

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### CAMPAIGN OF TALAVERA, 1809.

Position of French by end of June, 1809. By the end of June, the French armies had been reinforced by some fresh conscripts, and the positions they had at this time assumed in the Peninsula were as follows:—

Victor near Talavera—25,000.

Joseph, and other French corps, covering Madrid upon the south—50,000 in all.

Soult, Ney, and Mortier—respectively at Zamora, Astorga, and Valladolid,—also about 50,000 in all. The two latter corps had (*unknown* to Sir Arthur Wellesley), been recently ordered by the Emperor to these positions; and the whole had been placed under the command of Soult.

In addition to the above forces, other French corps occupied the northern and eastern provinces of Spain, but these were sufficiently employed in holding the country, and in defending themselves and their communications, from the various bands of Spaniards which about this time began to collect in large bodies in the mountain ranges, and to carry on a constant

petty warfare,\* capturing convoys and murdering their escorts whenever an opportunity presented itself. The operations of these Guerilla bands under Mina, the Empecinado, and various other chieftains, have been so much enlarged upon in most accounts of the war in the Peninsula, that some allusion to them, even in a brief narrative of this description, is almost necessary. It is, however, sufficient to say, that although they were a sharp and constant thorn in the side of the French, they never, from their undisciplined attacks, succeeded in thwarting any really important combination, having, when joined together in very large bands, the inconveniences of regular armies without their good qualities. For this reason their movements will be rarely alluded to.

The Allies, also, had obtained some reinforcements, and their positions were:—

Position of  
the Allied  
armies.

Sir Arthur Wellsley, at Abrantes—22,000.

Beresford, with some Portuguese and Spaniards, about Ciudad-Rodrigo—20,000.

- Sir Robert Wilson, with some Light Portuguese troops (forming the Lusitanian legion) between Salamanca and Avila—4,000.

Cuesta, with a Spanish army, near Mirabete, about 40,000.

Venegas, with some more Spaniards, near Carolina—25,000.

A re-inforcement of about 8,000 men was also expected up shortly from Lisbon by Sir Arthur.

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\* Called "Guerilla warfare," from the Spanish word "Guerilla" = "little war."

News of the  
battle of  
Aspern  
reaches the  
Peninsula.

While the hostile armies were thus situated, the news of a disastrous check to Napoleon in Austria reached the Peninsula. The battle of Aspern had been fought upon the Danube, and the French arms had (almost for the first time) experienced a serious—though, as it afterwards proved, but a temporary—defeat. The spirit of the Allies rose high, and the moment appeared an opportune one to strike a blow for the deliverance of Spain.

Influence  
upon Sir  
Arthur's  
plan—1st  
of his belief  
that Soult  
was alone;  
2nd, of the  
topography  
of the  
country.

Sir Arthur Wellesley was, as we have said, unaware of the vicinity of Mortier and Ney, to Soult. He considered the latter to *be alone*, and in his decision upon the plan of operations which he now engaged upon, this belief, and also some peculiarities connected with the *Topography of the country*, greatly influenced him.

Plan of  
campaign  
which he  
purposes  
to adopt.

The communications between the province of Leon—where he knew Soult to be—and the valley of the Tagus, were few and indifferent. Over the intervening mountains there were but two passes considered to be practicable for artillery. These were: *Perales* and *Baños*, through both of which roads descended, upon Plasencia. Sir Arthur considered that some Spanish troops detached by Cuesta, and supported by Beresford if necessary, could hold these passes against any attack of Soult, and that his own left flank being thus protected, he might—joining with the main body of Cuesta's army—advance up the Tagus against Victor and the French near Madrid, while Venegas co-operated, by moving against Toledo and Madrid from the south. Sir Robert Wilson was to try to harass Joseph, and distract his attention by moving by the Escorial towards Madrid.



Cuesta agreed to this plan; and it was arranged that the Spaniards should occupy these passes with four battalions, Beresford also having his eye on that of Perales, and that the armies of Cuesta and Sir A. Wellesley, should march in concert. On this occasion Sir Arthur Wellesley consented to advance out of Portugal with but scanty means of transport and *without magazines*, for he had ascertained beforehand, that the country was fully capable of sustaining his troops; had sent on officers to purchase mules; and had been assured on all sides by the Spanish authorities, that provisions would be provided for his army, and that every single article he needed should be forthcoming.

Cuesta  
agrees to it.

Sir Arthur  
trusts to  
Cuesta to  
provide  
food and  
transport.

His army marched—according to the plan agreed upon—by Plasencia, and united, on the 20th July, at Oropesa, with that of Cuesta; the latter having crossed the Tagus at Almaraz (where he restored the bridge of boats) and at Arzobispo. The combined forces then moved against Victor, who being without immediate support, fell back before them and took up a position behind the Alberche. Sir Arthur was preparing to attack him, when Cuesta, who was a changeable, irritable man, and too old for active service in the field, suddenly refused, and the opportunity of falling with superior forces upon Victor was lost. The French general, hearing just at this moment of Sir Robert Wilson's presence at Escalona, retired, but only for a short time, for Joseph now came forward to his support, and a large French force soon appeared in front of a position which had been chosen and taken up for the Allies by Sir Arthur Wellesley at Talavera. On the evening of the 27th, the French

The Allies  
move  
forward.

They unite  
and ad-  
vance  
against  
Victor.

Joseph and  
Victor at-  
tack them.

Battle of  
Talavera

(now all under the command of Joseph) endeavoured in vain to dislodge the Allies, and on the 28th, renewing their efforts, fought the battle of Talavera.

The brunt of this battle was borne almost exclusively by the British, who held the key of the position, and who repulsed, frequently at the point of the bayonet, every attack that was made upon them. Early on the 29th, the French, having sustained severe losses, fell back towards Madrid, but the British were unable to pursue them, for the Spaniards had failed in their promise of providing them with provisions, and they were now reduced to complete exhaustion from want of sustenance.

The French  
retire.

Bad faith of  
the Spaniards.

The British  
suffer  
from want  
of food.

During the march from Oropesa, the authorities of Spain had not performed their engagements with Sir Arthur, and while the Spanish troops had been well supplied with food, the British had been in extreme want of it, and had fought the battle of Talavera in a half-starved condition, having only had a few ounces of wheat in the grain to eat throughout that day. In addition to this, Sir Arthur could obtain no assistance for his wounded; and for these causes, becoming indignant with Cuesta and the authorities of Spain, he now refused firmly to stir one step further in advance. Writing on the 31st July, he says—"It is positively a fact, that during the last seven days the British army have not received one-third of their provisions, and that at this moment there are nearly 4,000 wounded soldiers dying in hospital from want of common assistance and necessaries, which any other country in the world would have given, even to its enemies. I positively will not move, nay, more, I will disperse

my army till I am supplied with provisions and means of transport, as I ought to be."

The Spanish authorities had thus been false to their Allies in the matter of provisions and transport. It was not the only point in which they were so. It may be noticed, that no mention has been made above of the movements of Venegas, who was to have operated against Toledo and Madrid from the south. This general had indeed moved forward, but in so slow a manner that he bore with no weight upon the campaign, and it was afterwards discovered that secret instructions had been issued to him by his government, which had thwarted those of Sir Arthur.

The orders to Venegas are interfered with.

These instances alone show in sufficiently strong light the folly, ingratitude, and bad faith with which the Spanish government and commanders behaved towards Sir Arthur Wellesley; but the English general had soon a still more decided proof of the untrustworthiness of his Allies, and one which nearly cost him his army.

On the 2nd of August he became aware that the promise made by Cuesta to occupy the pass of Baños had not been fulfilled; that he had only sent there a handful of men; and that Soult, having marched through the pass, was now at Plasencia in rear of the allied army.

The pass of Baños is not occupied.

Soult appears at Plasencia.

This threatened danger, caused Sir Arthur to face about; and, ignorant of the strength of Soult, he marched to attack him, leaving Cuesta behind at Talavera, with the understanding that if he retreated, he was to provide transport and bring away the wounded.

Sir Arthur advances to meet him.

One of the most serious of the junctures in which the British army was at any time placed in the Peninsula was now impending, for not only was Soult's corps at Plasencia, but the two others, [Ney's and Mortier's,] which had been placed under his command, and of the position of which Sir Arthur was entirely ignorant, were fast concentrating with him in the valley of the Tagus.

To understand this new situation of affairs, so critical for the Allies, we must turn for a moment to the movements of the French under Soult.

Explan-  
ation of the  
movements  
of Soult.

Napoleon's  
instructions  
to him.

When the Emperor had placed the corps of Ney and Mortier under the command of that marshal, he had told him to "concentrate;" and having (though at a distance in Austria), penetrated the probable movements of the Allies, had thus written—"Well-lesley will most likely advance by the Tagus against Madrid; in that case pass the mountains, fall on his flank and rear and crush him."

His  
endeavour  
to carry  
them out.

Soult received this letter on the 20th of June, and at once ordered Ney and Mortier to join him, and communicated his orders to Joseph. But the spirit of discord was now strong among the French commanders: Ney declined to move, holding it imprudent to uncover Leon; and at this moment Joseph, afraid of Venegas's corps to the south, called Mortier towards Madrid. Thus the concentration did not take place until after a long delay; and though at length Soult overcame the objections of Ney, and Joseph also sent back Mortier to Valladolid, it was the 18th of July before the three corps were in motion towards Salamanca. Upon this date, however—

two days before the junction between Sir Arthur Wellesley and Cuesta at Oropesa—these corps, 50,000 strong, were on the march to unite; Soult was aware of the Allies having passed through Plasencia; and cavalry posts were moving towards the pass of Baños,

As soon as his three corps were in motion, Soult sent an officer to Madrid to inform Joseph of the advance of the Allies, and to arrange operations with him. This officer reached Madrid on the 22nd of July, on which day Joseph was also made aware of the presence of the Allies at Talavera. He at once ordered Soult to move with speed upon Plasencia, and calling in all his troops, except a small force left at Toledo to watch Venegas, marched in person, to assist Victor against Sir Arthur Wellesley.

Explanation of Joseph's movements.

The result of his attack upon the allied position at Talavera on the 27th and 28th has been already mentioned, and from what we have said above, the advance of Soult without difficulty through the pass of Baños, and his presence at Plasencia, becomes intelligible.

On the 3rd August, Sir Arthur Wellesley (who, as we have said, had faced about, and was now marching as he thought against the single corps of Soult), reached Oropesa; and on the evening of that day, while he was still unconscious of the dangers which surrounded him, two couriers arrived in his camp.

Sir Arthur learns that Soult is in great strength and had occupied Naval Moral.

From one of these he learnt that the French under Soult's command were far stronger than he had supposed, and that that Marshal had already reached Naval Moral, thus cutting him off from one of his lines of retreat across the Tagus, viz.—that by the bridge of



Also that  
Cuesta is  
retreating.

Danger of  
his position.

He retires  
across the  
Tagus.

Operations  
of Sir R.  
Wilson.

Almaraz. From the other he discovered that Joseph was again advancing; and that Cuesta had determined to fall back in haste from Talavera, abandoning the British wounded to their fate. Sir Arthur, though he still far under-estimated the real strength of the enemy, now saw that he had but two alternatives left to him, viz.—either to retire across the Tagus by the bridge of Arzobispo, and so reach the road through Truxillo and Merida, before the French intercepted it—or to stand his ground, and with an army depressed in spirit by long abstinence, fight two marshals superior to him in numbers, and moving in combination against his front, his rear, and his line of retreat. The Spaniards were not to be depended upon, and Napier tells us that “the peril was now apparent to every soldier in the British ranks.” Under these circumstances, Sir Arthur determined to fall back, and on the 4th, the army crossed the bridge of Arzobispo, and moved towards Jaracejo. The Spaniards under Cuesta retreated by the same route; and thus the plans of the French for the destruction of the Allies were foiled; but the escape was a most narrow one, and an engagement ensued during the passage of the bridge by the Spaniards, which was far from creditable to the latter.

During all these movements, Sir R. Wilson's handful of troops did all that was possible to harass Joseph. They advanced within 12 miles of Madrid, and threw the French there into great alarm. Before the day of the battle of Talavera, Sir R. Wilson was ordered to retire, and join Sir A. Wellesley, but the unexpected events which followed the battle prevented his doing so, and he escaped with difficulty



from Soult and got back to Portugal by the pass of Baños, where he had a sharp engagement with the latter's forces.

It is unnecessary to mention in detail any of the further movements of this campaign. The French made no effort to follow up the Allies, who had managed upon the retreat towards Jaracejo to destroy the bridge at Almaraz. Their commanders differed in opinion as to the plans to be adopted; and at length, satisfied with saving Madrid, they again separated their forces. It should be mentioned that the British wounded abandoned at Talavera were treated by the enemy with great humanity.

Sir Arthur Wellesley finding (after a long and angry correspondence with Cuesta) that it was impossible to procure with certainty a sufficiency of either food or transport, determined to remove his army from Spain, and trust no more to the Spaniards. On the 19th of August he left Spain and retired again into Portugal. Withdrawing his troops by the road through Merida and Badajoz, he afterwards marched northward and quartered them on the banks of the Agueda, between Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo, commencing at the same time in secret to fortify the country around Lisbon, endeavouring to make his hold upon that corner of Portugal secure by the construction of the *Lines of Torres Vedras*.

Sir A. Wellesley leaves Spain.

Marches to the river Agueda.

Commences the Lines of Torres Vedras.

#### REMARKS.

When Sir Arthur Wellesley, at the opening of this campaign, meditated his offensive movement into Spain, three courses (including the one he did adopt) were open to him.

In invading Spain three courses open to Sir A. Wellesley.

1st. To operate through Elvas and Badajoz, making these fortresses his base, join with Cuesta south of the Tagus, cross that river with him, and then move towards Madrid.

2nd. To operate through Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo, making those fortresses his base, join with Beresford, and then move by Salamanca on Madrid.

3rd. To operate (as he did) through Plasencia, along the north bank of the Tagus, join with Cuesta on that bank, and thus move towards Madrid.

Objections  
to the 1st  
course.

The objections to the first plan were, that both armies would have the Tagus to cross after uniting; the bridges were few, and Victor might oppose their passage. Moreover, it would be necessary to leave strong detachments on the N. bank to cover the roads to Lisbon, and the communication between Soult and Victor being open, Beresford's corps, isolated at Ciudad-Rodrigo, would be endangered.

To the 2nd.

The objections to the 2nd plan were, that it would completely separate the British from Cuesta, and that if the latter were attacked and defeated, an advance on Lisbon and Seville, and even the capture of those cities, could hardly be prevented.

To the 3rd.

The objections to the 3rd plan were, that the junction of the British with Cuesta might be opposed by Victor, and thus rendered difficult. The line of march also, along the northern bank of the Tagus, between the mountain spurs and the river, would not only be confined and cramped, but also critical, for it exposed the flank of the army to Soult, should he succeed in forcing the passes.

Reason for  
adopting  
the 3rd.

It was, as we have before mentioned, the fact that there were but two known passes practicable for

artillery; the belief that the Spaniards could, and would, hold these; and the mistake as to the strength of Soult, that influenced Sir Arthur to adopt the 3rd plan as the best.

But it may be asked—What definite end did Sir Arthur propose to obtain in this campaign, since it was not to be expected that he could hold his ground near Madrid *for any length of time* against the forces which the French could, sooner or later, move towards him? The answer to this is, that he designed to aid the Spaniards by attempting the recovery of the Spanish capital, if only for a short time, from the French. Madrid was not a strong city; the French, covering it at various points upon the south, were but 50,000, while he, Cuesta, and Venegas, united, would be about 90,000. There was also a possibility of his being able to fall suddenly upon one corps of the French (Victor's), and inflict a defeat upon it. The capture of Madrid would have been a serious loss to the enemy, as it was the general depôt of all the French armies; and even had it been necessary to fall back immediately after its capture, the temporary occupation of the city alone would have produced a great moral impression in the Peninsula.

Viewing the campaign as a matter of past history, and considering those events in it, which did actually occur, the belief that Sir Arthur's plans would have been successful, had they not been marred by unlooked for circumstances, seems fully justified. The opportunity of falling upon Victor with superior forces in his position behind the Alberche, did actually present itself; but to all Sir Arthur's entreaties for an attack, Cuesta was deaf, Victor was rein-

Objective  
of Sir A.  
Wellesley  
in this cam-  
paign.

Probability  
that his  
plans would  
have suc-  
ceeded.

forced by Joseph, and the favourable chance passed away.

Had Victor been overwhelmed, and Venegas co-operated faithfully by the line of Toledo, Joseph must have retreated towards Madrid, and there is no reason to doubt that that city [which was weakly fortified, was by position badly adapted for defence, and which Napoleon had reduced in two days,] would have fallen quickly to the Allies. Had Soult's strength been that which Sir Arthur conceived it to be, and, had Cuesta carried out his promises, there was every reason to suppose that the Spaniards would have been able to hold the mountain passes against the enemy, and prevent such a march as that which the French Marshal was able to carry out.

Extra-ordinary circumstances of the campaign.

The phases of this campaign, as they successively unfolded themselves, were of so extraordinary a nature, that Sir Arthur Wellesley could hardly, by possibility, have anticipated them. He could not foresee that Cuesta, in his suicidal folly and bad faith, would neglect the pass of Baños; that the Spanish government would interfere with his orders to Venegas; or that a concentration and march, such as that of Soult, could be concealed so long from him. That this concentration and this march *were* so long concealed, must ever remain a fact most difficult of explanation, and one which had it not occurred would have been deemed impossible. And yet it is on this account no less true, and it affords another lesson of the necessity for *incessant effort in obtaining information of the enemy's movements*.

Lesson taught by it.

Sir Arthur could scarcely credit the situation in

which he found himself when he heard of Soult's strength and his position at Plasencia; and writing afterwards, he says, "*I did not think it possible* that three French corps, under three marshals, could have been assembled at Salamanca, without the knowledge of the governor of Ciudad-Rodrigo, or of the Junta" (*i.e.*, the government) "of Castille, or that they could have penetrated into Estremadura without a shot being fired at them."

Speaking of Joseph's attack on the allied position at Talavera, which brought on the battle at that point, Napier characterises it as "a palpable, an enormous fault." It was unmistakably to the interest of Joseph (who was aware of Soult's advance upon the allied rear) to delay his attack, and if possible, by retiring, draw the Allies further into the net prepared for them. Soult had clearly seen this, and had written to him in these words, "The most important results will be obtained, if your majesty will *abstain from attacking* until the moment when the knowledge of my march causes the enemy to retrace his steps." Joseph, however, allowed himself to be over-persuaded by Victor, and attacked, instead of waiting for Soult.

Fault of Joseph in fighting at Talavera.

Victory on the field of Talavera rested with the Allies, and though no material advantage was gained from it, the moral effect produced upon the French by the desperate fighting of the British infantry, was a marked one. Jomini (himself a general in the French army) says, that "It proved that the British infantry could dispute the palm with the best in Europe." After this battle, the French, it has been

Moral effect of battle of Talavera on the French.



asserted, never approached the British with the same confidence of victory that they had formerly felt.

March of  
Light  
Division.

The marching of some of the British troops from Lisbon to join in this day's battle affords a good example of what can be done upon occasion by highly-trained men. These men, under General Crauford (43rd, 52nd and 95th Regiments) marched, leaving but 17 stragglers behind, the great distance of 62 miles in 26 hours, in a hot day in summer, each soldier carrying over 50 pounds in weight, and though they arrived too late to join in the fight, they took the outpost duty immediately after reaching the battlefield.

Vital im-  
portance  
of food and  
transport.

The anxiety and disappointment which, in this campaign, the want of food and transport caused to Sir Arthur Wellesley, show the vital importance of these matters, even more strongly than did the delays and the long drawn out columns in that of Sir John Moore.

By advancing into Spain without having prepared any magazines, Sir Arthur was at the mercy of his allies; and as he was unable in a friendly country to take food by force, and could not get it by other means, he was compelled to abandon Spain and retire into Portugal. His army, though they fought bravely in a half-fed condition at Talavera, at length fell into a very bad state. He himself, writing shortly after that battle, says: "The soldiers lose their discipline "and their spirit; they plunder even in the presence "of their officers. The officers are discontented, and "are almost as bad as the men; and with an army



"which a fortnight ago beat double their numbers, I  
 "should now hesitate to meet a French corps of half  
 "their strength."

One great cause why the French and allied armies in this campaign, both failed to achieve any result at all commensurate with the number of soldiers in the field was, that both armies were under a "divided command." Frequent changes of the head of an army, as in the campaign of 1808, or having more than one head as in this campaign, are alike evils. In this case Sir Arthur Wellesley could not manage his independent ally Cuesta; Joseph could not manage his semi-independent marshals; and the marshals could not work in unison with one another, or with Joseph. Among the evil consequences ensuing from this division of authority and want of concert, were these.

1st. Soult's inability to concentrate when Napoleon [as mentioned on page 82] ordered him to do so (for Ney refused to leave Astorga, and Joseph brought Mortier towards Madrid).

2nd. Victor's overruling Joseph, and persuading him to fight at Talavera.

3rd. The power of Cuesta, by his impracticable conduct, to interfere with all the plans of Sir Arthur Wellesley.

These evils bore heavily on the campaign, and made it for both armies a comparative failure.

Powerful alliances may often render a divided command an advantage (upon the whole), as they frequently render it a necessity; but at the same time, in such a command, there is an unavoidable and inherent weakness.

Evils of a  
divided  
command.

Examples  
in this  
campaign.

Instances of  
the failure  
of double  
lines of  
operations.

In this campaign we have a marked instance of the failure of double lines of operation.

Napier remarks, that experience proves, that without extraordinary good fortune, some accident will always happen to mar the combinations of armies operating by more than one line. It should be noticed, that both armies in this campaign were advancing by a "Double line." Each was divided into separate bodies, and was endeavouring to close by different roads upon the enemy, and then attack him in combination. Joseph was attempting to combine with Soult—Wellesley and Cuesta (united) were attempting to combine with Venegas; and both the combinations in reality failed.

The weakness in  
operating  
by more  
than one  
line.

In operations of this kind, the divided portions of an army find great difficulty in obtaining intelligence of each other's movements (especially if the enemy be vigilant), and moreover a change in the position of the enemy completely frustrates all previous arrangements. For these reasons they are difficult to carry out, and though circumstances often render such operations unavoidable (and sometimes successful), they are, from being less simple, more liable to failure than operations by a single line. Success in them depends, in fact, almost entirely upon the preparations for the march being so good and complete, and the knowledge of the difficulties of the country and enemy's position so thoroughly perfect, that no change can well occur to cause delay. We shall see in other campaigns in this war instances of successful operations by more than one line, and we may mention that the Prussians operated successfully by more than one line in the war with Austria in 1866 and in their late war with France.

In this campaign the divided command increased, of course, the chances against success.

We see again in this campaign the influence upon the operations of the topography of the country.

Importance of a knowledge of the topography of a country shown.

If the long chain of the Guadarama had not existed, practicable at but two points for artillery, Sir Arthur Wellesley would never have thought of advancing up the Tagus, exposing his flank to Soult. Again, if the Tagus had been a fordable river, or bridged at many places, its character as an obstacle would have been entirely different.

As it was, when Sir Arthur Wellesley was at Oropesa on the 3rd August, and heard that Soult was at Naval Moral, on the road to the boat-bridge at Almaraz, he was placed in this position:—In his front and rear were the French; on his right an almost impassable mountain range; and on his left a river, to be crossed (at all events with artillery and baggage) but at Arzobispo alone.

He could only retreat over that bridge, or cut his way through the enemy. "We were in a bad scrape (he says), and I really believe that if I had not determined to retire at the moment I did, all retreat would have been cut off for both."

Again, if, after he had retired through Arzobispo and taken up his position at Jaracejo, the Tagus had been of a different character, the French could have easily crossed, and pursued immediately. But what are the facts?

Sir Arthur, writing from Deleytosa near Jaracejo, tells us in these words:—

"The possession of the bridge of Almaraz, and of

the mountains between that point and the bridge of Arzobispo, protects the country behind the Tagus from Toledo nearly to Abrantes, as the enemy cannot penetrate with cannon at any point between Almaraz and Toledo, and the passage of the river is nearly impracticable for an army between Almaraz and Abrantes."

It would be hardly possible to illustrate more completely that there can be no comprehension whatever of the true nature of the military movements over a country's surface without a knowledge of the "*topography*" of the country.

The following extract from a letter of Sir Arthur Wellesley to Lord Castlereagh, written after he had retreated to Jaracejo, gives in very few words his opinion of the conduct of the Spaniards in this campaign. "I have but little to add (he says) to my public despatch of this date, which I hope will justify me from all blame in the eyes of his Majesty's Ministers, excepting that of having *trusted the Spanish general in anything.*"

Sir Arthur  
created  
Viscount  
Wellington.

One advantage gained by the Allies in this campaign.

For the victory of Talavera Sir Arthur Wellesley was created Viscount Wellington.

The only advantage which can be said to have been gained by the Allies in this campaign was, that Galicia was evacuated by the French in order to move down upon Sir Arthur.

## LECTURE VI.

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### CAMPAIGN OF BUSACO, 1810.—MASSENA'S INVASION OF PORTUGAL.

THE experience gained in the Talavera campaign, convinced Lord Wellington that but little assistance in freeing the Peninsula was to be obtained from the Spaniards, and that by the British and Portuguese alone the deliverance of the country must be wrought out. It became more evident to him also day by day that any success against the masses of the French must be a slow and gradual one; and that he might even be driven, as Sir John Moore had been, to retreat to the sea, perhaps to an embarkation of the army.

His efforts were now directed to the raising and organising of a larger force of Portuguese, to placing provisions and garrisons in fortified ports at Abrantes, Setuval, Peniche, &c., as well as in the frontier fortresses of Almeida and Elvas; and above all to the strengthening of the lines of Torres Vedras.

Cadiz and Gibraltar were the only points out of Portugal now, held in the Peninsula by the British, who remained within the Portuguese frontier entirely upon the defensive.

Sir Arthur determines to trust to the Portuguese alone to assist him to deliver the Peninsula.

Measures taken by him.



To the few who know of the existence of the fortifications about Torres Vedras—which we shall briefly describe further on—they appeared to have been designed with the mere object of covering the retreat of the British army to their ships, or of protecting Lisbon from a *coup de main*, and nothing more; but by Wellington himself, they had always been regarded as the barrier beyond which the French should never advance. Events soon proved the correctness of his judgment, and his reputation was raised, by the selection, and construction of these lines, to an unquestioned eminence.

After battle  
of Wagram  
Napoleon  
increases  
his forces  
in Spain.

It has been mentioned that the news of the defeat of Napoleon at Aspern, in Austria, had raised the spirits of the Allies, and been the forerunner of the campaign of Talavera. That defeat Napoleon afterwards avenged by the brilliant victory of Wagram (6th July, 1809), and having humbled Austria in this battle, and subsequently in October concluded a peace with her, he again turned his attention to the Peninsula, sending there from Germany many thousands of his troops, and increasing his armies destined to be quartered in Spain to the enormous total of 366,000 men, with a view to making further and greater efforts for the complete subjugation of the country and the expulsion of the British from Portugal.

Movement  
of Soult.

From the time of Wellington's retreat into Portugal after Talavera in 1809 until June, 1810, no very important operations went on against the British, but events were rapidly preparing the way for them.

In January, Marshal Soult had collected a large force—about 70,000—near the passes of the Sierra



Morena mountains, forced them, and afterwards subdued Seville and all the chief cities of Andalusia—over-running the entire province, with the exception of Cadiz, which place he besieged, confining the garrison to the Island of Leon.

Napoleon in the meantime was assembling a large army for the invasion of Portugal from the direction of Salamanca, to be placed under the command of Massena, one of his most celebrated Marshals, called from an unvarying course of success in Germany and elsewhere, the “spoiled child of victory,” and pouring forward troops to form and reinforce this army along the line of communication from Salamanca to the Pyrenees. Simultaneously with these operations the French were actively engaged in subduing the various Spanish Provinces, of Murcia, Valencia, Catalonia, Aragon, Navarre, Biscay Leon, the Asturias, &c., and with such success that by the end of May, 1810, they were masters of three-fourths of the kingdom.

The month of June, 1810, may perhaps be regarded as the most critical epoch of affairs in the Peninsula; for not only had the Spanish armies been nearly annihilated, and their chief fortified places (except Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz) subdued; while the French soldiers were fastening in masses upon the country, but the British people had begun to despair of success, and a strong party in Parliament clamoured for the withdrawal of the British troops, so that the least serious reverse would have entailed their recall. It was owing to the firmness of Wellington alone that the struggle was still continued.

Napoleon  
assembles  
an army to  
invade  
Portugal.

This epoch  
an important  
one for  
the Peninsula.

In the month of June, when the first serious advance of the French took place, the positions of the contending armies may be thus put down :—

#### THE FRENCH.

Position of  
French in  
the month  
of June.

The *Army of the South*, under Soult, composed of the corps of Victor, Mortier, and Sebastiani, about 60,000 in Andalusia.

The *Army of the Centre*, under Joseph, about 24,000 around Madrid.

The *Army of Portugal*, under Massena, composed of the corps of Ney, Reynier and Junot, and the reserve cavalry of Montbrun, about 80,000. This army could be reinforced by other troops which were extended from Salamanca by Zamora Valladolid, Burgos, &c., to the French frontier. The corps of Ney and Junot, and Montbrun's cavalry, were at Salamanca; the corps of Reynier in the valley of the Tagus, near Alcantara.

The remainder of the 366,000 men were spread over the various provinces.

Soult had been appointed by Napoleon Major-General of the armies in Spain under Joseph, as well as Commander of the Army of the South, and in reality was almost independent of even the authority of Joseph.

#### THE ALLIES.

—of the  
Allies.

To meet the invasion which was evidently threatening, and which might come from various quarters, it was necessary that the Allies should be somewhat widely distributed, and Wellington had posted them

thus:—The bulk of the British army, under his own immediate command, at Viseu, Celorico, Guarda, and Pinhel—head quarters being at Celorico; the Cavalry along the valley of the Mondego, and some at Belmonte; and 4,000 men of the Light Division under Crawford pushed out between the rivers Coa and Agueda, watching Ciudad-Rodrigo. The strength in all nearly 25,000 men.

The remainder of the British (about 5,000) and some Portuguese, under Hill, at Abrantes and Portalegre (on the road towards Badajoz)—about 10,000 in all.

The bulk of the Portuguese regular troops paid by England, and commanded by British officers, at Thomar, as a reserve; and in the fortresses of Almeida, Elvas, &c.—nearly 30,000.

The Portuguese Militia—21 regiments—to the North of the Duero; and a somewhat greater number under command of Beresford, at Setuval, at different points of the Alemtejo, and thrown out behind the Elga and the Ponsul—nearly 30,000.

In order to secure supplies, depôts were established along the rivers, viz.,—at Abrantes and near Lisbon, on the Tagus; at Figueras and Pena Cova, on the Mondego; and at Oporto and Lamego on the Duero. Magazines of consumption also were placed at Viseu, Celorico, Condeixa, Leirya, Thomar and Almeida. Flying bridges were constructed on the Tagus and Zezere rivers, near Abrantes; and also over the Tagus at Vilha Velha. Roads were improved in the interior of Portugal, as far as possible, in order to assist the Allied communication; for instance, the road from

Precautions  
taken by  
the Allies.

Abrantes by Thomar and Espinhal to the Mondego, (connecting Hill, by a short route, with Wellington); and that on the left bank of the Tagus from Abrantes, by Vilha Velha, to Castello-Branco, (connecting Hill with the advanced Portuguese Militia on the Ponsul). A chain of posts by Guarda, Espinhal and Thomar to Abrantes was also established to secure the communication between Hill and Wellington.

Certain roads also leading towards the allied posts, such for instance as that from Castello-Branco over the mountains to Abrantes (by Sobriera Formosa), and that leading from Sabugal, by Belmonte, and along the valley of the Zezere to Thomar were made more difficult by breaking them up.

Signal telegraphs were also established from Lisbon to Abrantes and Almeida.

In this position, Wellington awaited the unfolding of the French plans, working all the time at the lines of Torres Vedras—Crawford being instructed on the approach of the French in any strength, to retire behind the Coa, and not to risk any serious action on the right bank.

Napoleon's  
plan of  
campaign.

Napoleon's plan of campaign was for Massena to invade Portugal from Salamanca, while Soult advanced on Badajoz and Elvas. The invasion of Massena was to be the real serious effort to drive the allies back; but Soult also, after taking Badajoz and Elvas, was to endeavour to reach Lisbon from that direction.

Massena  
commences  
operations.

Early in June—it being understood that Soult was to co-operate from Andalusia—Massena commenced

his operations by sending Ney across the Agueda to invest Ciudad-Rodrigo, while the corps of Reynier, in the valley of the Tagus, was kept in motion in order to perplex Wellington, and prevent him from drawing away troops from that quarter. Hill counter-manceuvred, in order to watch Reynier, and prevent his pushing past him into Portugal.

Crawford fell back towards the Coa before Ney's force, which was six times stronger than his own, and Wellington, knowing that he would be powerless, to prevent Ciudad-Rodrigo falling in the end, made no effort to relieve it, and the place surrendered to the French on the 10th of July.

Crawford  
retires  
before Ney.

French  
take  
Ciudad-  
Rodrigo.

After the fall of this fortress, Ney advanced threatening Almeida; and Crawford, anxious to delay the the fall of the place as far as possible, remained out dangerously long near the fortress, braving an attack, as it were, in opposition (in spirit at all events) to the directions he had received from Wellington. The result was that he was nearly surrounded by the larger force of Ney, and obliged to draw off his troops hastily over the Coa, under fire, and by one narrow bridge, sacrificing several lives, and very nearly losing his entire force, which was composed of the pick of the British Light Division.

Danger to  
Crawford's  
Division.

Wellington now withdrew all his own troops to the left bank of the Mondego, except one division posted at Guarda to keep open the communication with Hill and watch the road from Almeida, while the Militia in the north harassed Massena's rear, and captured Senabria.

Pause in  
the cam-  
paign.

Until the 15th August Massena made no further

decided movements, but merely kept Reynier, as before, in motion in the Tagus valley. This delay was partially caused by his being anxious to hear what Soult—who had detached the corps of Mortier towards Badajoz—was accomplishing in the south, before he entered decidedly into the campaign.

Massena  
invests  
Almeida.

At length, on the 15th August, he invested Almeida with Ney's corps. Wellington, with a view of endeavouring to disturb him, recrossed the Mondego, but as he was advancing the place capitulated (on the 28th), and he again fell back.

Takes  
Almeida,

and moves  
forward.

Both the frontier fortresses of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Almeida were now in Massena's hands, and Reynier having been brought up from the valley of the Tagus to join him, he moved forward. On the 12th September his advance entered Guarda [Wellington retiring before him] and on the 16th he had concentrated his troops thus:—

Junot (with the artillery and the cavalry) at Pinhel.

Ney at Macal.

Reynier at Guarda.

Line of his  
advance.

From these points he put his three corps in motion for Viseu, advancing with Ney and Reynier along the left bank of the Mondego, as if intending to continue his march by that bank, but, after arriving at Fornos, crossing suddenly to the right.

Junot, with the artillery, and cavalry was ordered direct from Pinhel to Viseu, without crossing the Mondego, and on the march was much delayed and harassed by the Portuguese Militia.

Enters  
Viseu.

Massena's main body entered Viseu September



21st, but the artillery was in rear, and did not arrive till the 23rd.

Wellington had fallen back before the French advance, by the *left* bank of the Mondego, directing Hill to join him on the Alva river, by Espinhal, as soon as he was certain that Reynier had moved northwards; and also ordering up some British and Portuguese troops—who had arrived from Lisbon, and were at Thomar under General Leith.

Proclamations had some time before this been issued to the inhabitants of Portugal by the Portuguese Government, at the instance of Lord Wellington, directing them, upon the French approach, to lay waste their fields, break down their bridges and mills, destroy their crops, (excepting only what they could carry off with them,) and retire within the lines of Torres Vedras. It was hoped that by this means the country would be turned into an inhospitable desert for the French, affording no sustenance for man or beast.

Massena, having received his artillery, continued his advance, moving along the right bank of the Mondego by Martagoa on Coimbra, and Wellington, having observed his line of march, fell back along the left bank behind the river Alva.

The road (see Map III.), by which Massena was moving upon Coimbra, approaches at a few leagues north of that town, the Sierra of Busaco. This Sierra rises to some 250 feet above the surrounding slopes, which overhang the right bank of the Mondego, which river flows in a deep gorge between it and the Sierra Murcella, on the left bank.

At Martagoa, close to the river Criz one of the affluents of the Mondego, the road branches off into five other roads leading by different directions towards Coimbra. Of these, three afford the only practicable routes over the Sierra of Busaco; a fourth (a poor road) leads westward, over the mountains of Caramula, and by the Boyalva pass to Sardao, turning the Sierra, and striking (at Sardao) the main road from Oporto to Coimbra; the fifth turns the Sierra by the right, passing the Mondego near Pena Cova, but exposed for a long distance to the flank fire of guns from the Sierra Busaco.

It was determined by Wellington—who was behind the Murcella ridge, and had officers posted in the mountains to watch the direction of the French advance—to endeavour to bar Massena's path at the Sierra of Busaco, both in order to raise the spirits of his own soldiers and of the people of Portugal, and also to gain time, which would enable him to withdraw his magazines from Coimbra and Condeixa, and aid the Portuguese peasantry in carrying out the destruction of the crops, and the laying waste the country. This Sierra offered a very strong position, and Hill—who had anticipated Wellington's orders, and moved to join him directly he found that Reynier had gone off towards Massena—and Leith (from Thomar) having now arrived, Wellington, on the 26th September, drew up the army upon it, with the exception of a few troops left on the other bank of the Mondego for purposes of observation, and the cavalry who were posted on the Oporto road, south of Sardao, watching the left. Wellington also directed some Portuguese

Wellington  
takes up a  
position at  
Busaco.

Militia to move from Lamego upon Sardao and the Boyalva pass, to prevent his being turned by that road. The road by Pena Cova it was unnecessary to guard, from its exposure to artillery from the Sierra.

Massena came up on the 26th, and thinking that the Allies were weaker than they were—for he was unaware of the junction of Leith and Hill—tried to force the position on the 27th (Ney and Reynier being in advance, Junot in reserve), and fought the battle of *Busaco*. In this battle the Allies numbered about 49,000, the French 66,000.

Massena attacks him.

Battle of Busaco.

The attack resulted in a severe repulse of the French.

The day following the battle (the 28th) Massena discovered the road by the Boyalva pass and Sardao, which passed round the left of the Allied position, and in the night made towards the pass. It has been mentioned above that Wellington had ordered some Portuguese Militia from Lamego towards Sardao, but by a mistake made in sending them, in consequence of the appearance of a French patrol, by an unnecessarily circuitous route through Oporto, they had not arrived. Massena gained the Oporto-Coimbra road, and so secured the advantage of being able to turn Wellington's position on the Busaco heights.

Massena turns Wellington's position.

Wellington then abandoned the heights, and retired by Coimbra, Pombal, and Leirya to the lines of Torres Vedras. Massena followed confidently, sack- ing Coimbra, and forcing occasional rearguard actions upon the allies; and found himself on the 10th Octo-

Wellington retires to the lines of Torres Vedras.

ber face to face with the formidable works which Wellington had erected to defend Lisbon, having up to that time never even heard of their existence.

Description  
of the  
lines.

He now, however, saw a barrier in his path which struck him with such astonishment that he retired, and did not come forward again for two days, when he cautiously reconnoitred the allied position. Any detailed account of the lines of Torres Vedras would occupy too much space to be given here. They consisted of three great lines of defence. To form the first or outer one, a tract of country, thirty miles in length, extending from Alhandra on the Tagus, across by Torres Vedras to the sea, had been fortified with numerous redoubts, and bristled with guns. This country, by nature most formidably strong, had been made stronger by scarping the mountains, damming up the rivers, forming inundations, and breaking up roads. Inside this barrier, eight miles in rear, was a second and still stronger line: and behind this, around Lisbon, an intrenched camp; the defences in all consisting of some 150 redoubts, on which were mounted 600 cannon.

Some idea of the scale upon which these works were constructed may be formed from the fact that 10,000 peasants, relieved weekly, had been employed upon them for a long time. Across these lines led the only roads by which the French could approach Lisbon, and these (only five of which, practicable for artillery, crossed the 1st line, and four the 2nd line) were defended by every kind of obstacle. Signal posts had been established on the principal heights, and

the nature of the country was such that while behind the lines communication from one end to the other was easy for the defenders, the ridge of mountains to the north (the Baragueda) divided an army facing the right and left extremities of the lines by a formidable natural obstacle.

The position of Massena was now as gloomy as it <sup>Massena</sup> had before seemed hopeful. For one month, extended <sup>seeks in</sup> along the front of the lines, he sought in vain to find <sup>vain to</sup> enter them a practicable entrance, and during this month the Portuguese militia and peasantry closed upon his rear; cut off his communications with Spain; destroyed his magazines; and forced him to seek for sustenance by dispersing his army over the half-deserted country. During this time he sent a messenger (General Foy) to Paris, imploring Napoleon to order reinforcements to his succour, and in November made an effort to pass across the Tagus, in order to get into the comparatively rich and untouched district of the Alemtejo, but the British force under Hill watched the river so closely that he found it impossible. He then withdrew to Santarem, Leirya, Thomar and Punhete, (where he began to collect materials for bridging the Tagus,) and Wellington, coming out, took up a position facing him at Cartaxo, and along the Rio-Mayor to Alcanhete, leaving a small force in the lines. Thus the two armies remained in presence four months (which takes us into the year 1811), the policy of Wellington, who was well supplied himself from Lisbon and the sea, being not to lose his own men in any engagement, but to reduce his enemy by famine.

Movements  
of Soult's  
force.

During these operations, the corps of Mortier sent by Soult towards Badajoz (and watched by Hill's force) had done nothing of importance, but the French troops in many of the provinces (and especially in Catalonia) had been active during the autumn and winter months, and had taken several more of the Spanish strongholds, including Tortosa.

Situation at  
close of  
1810.

At the end of 1810 the contest was thus balanced:—

The French had succeeded in confining the British to one corner of Portugal; they had *captured Ciudad-Rodrigo and Almeida*; had subdued almost all Spain with the exception of Cadiz (which still held out) and Badajoz; and could also draw large reinforcements from France.

On the other hand, they had not yet driven Wellington *out* of Portugal, and the English government and people, aroused by the victory of Busaco and the check to Massena, were more inclined than at the beginning of the year, to hope for a favourable turn of affairs and to prosecute the war.

#### REMARKS.

The position taken up by the Allied Army in Portugal, in order to await the French invasion, has been so fully described, and the different roads, &c., by which the armies operated put down with so much detail, because an examination into this campaign in these particulars is both interesting and instructive.



The French could have invaded Portugal by several different lines :—

- 1st. From the north, crossing the river Duero, as Soult had attempted in 1809.
- 2nd. From some point between the Duero and the Tagus rivers, either on the northern (for instance, from Ciudad-Rodrigo) or the southern (for instance, from Coria) side of the great chain of the Gaudarama.
- 3rd. From the south of the River Tagus, between it and the Guadiana (*e.g.*, from Badajoz).

Lines by which the French could have invaded Portugal.

The greatest danger was to be apprehended from the directions of Almeida, in the north, and Badajoz in the south; both because it would be an object to the French to gain the fortresses of Almeida and Badajoz, and on account of the roads past them being the best for an invading army. *All points*, however, had to be watched.

The dispositions of Wellington were such, that while a portion of the Portuguese Militia observed the first of the above lines, he himself, stretching from Viseu to Guarda and Belmonte, and with Beresford's Portuguese Militia about the Elga and Ponsul, observed the second; and Hill about Abrantes and Portalegre, the third.

Discussion of Wellington's dispositions.

The reserves occupied a central position at Thomar, and the arrangements as to bridges, roads, chains of posts, &c., mentioned as having been made to increase the facility of the allied communications and impede the movements of the French, left nothing undone which, under the circumstances, was possible to ensure security from surprise and hamper the enemy.

Wellington had an *interior* position with regard to the French, and in two marches could count, if he deemed fit, on concentrating over 35,000 men, not including men in garrison, &c., between Guarda and the Duero—*i.e.*, towards Almeida—or at Guarda, (by uniting his own troops with the Militia north of the river, or with the Portuguese from Thomar); and about 30,000 in the Alentejo—*i.e.*, towards Badajoz (by uniting Hill's force with the Militia in that neighbourhood, and out towards the Elga and Ponsul); and as the line of invasion became pronounced, the troops from Thomar and any reinforcements landed from England could be easily ordered up. By the ability he possessed of concentrating at any point along the frontier a very fairly large body of troops, Wellington forced the French to keep together, which rendered it more easy for him to discover their intentions and increased their difficulties of subsistence.

The regular troops (under Wellington and Hill) were kept, it may be noticed, compactly together in the centre, and the more untrained ones (Militia), instead of being intermixed with them, were separated, and posted at the two extreme wings. Guarda was evidently an important point to hold until the last, as communication was kept up through it with Hill; and from it the intentions of the French, if they came by Almeida, as to their further line of march (*i.e.*, whether by the valley of the Mondego or Zezere) could be best discovered. Hill also and the Militia along the Ponsul had a very responsible duty to perform in guarding the line of the Tagus, for it can be seen that *if* the French could force their way past

them before Wellington could come from the north, they could then interpose between the latter and Lisbon. There was also some possibility of the enemy being able to come down, without warning, through the passes of the Guadarama, and then by crossing at Alcantara, or forcing a passage at Vilha Velha, getting upon the good road on the left bank of the Tagus [the road we mean which Wellington had made from Abrantes to Vilha Velha in order to communicate with Hill], thus turning the difficult roads on the right bank. The Tagus, though usually a very formidable obstacle, became at times in the great droughts of summer fordable at points even below Abrantes, and the French, after they had gained the left bank, might have re-crossed successfully at or below Abrantes, driving Hill back by force of numbers.

The line of invasion adopted by the French should be examined. Of the different lines above alluded to as open to them, the 1st had been tried by Soult, who had found it difficult and failed. The 3rd was about to be tried by Soult in aid of Massena's own movements. The choice therefore almost necessarily narrowed itself to the 2nd, and the selection lay between the lines to the north and south of the chain of the Guadarama.

Discussion  
as to  
Massena's  
choice of  
his line of  
invasion.

That to the north was the nearer to Massena's position at Salamanca, and the most direct. To operate by the southern (in which case he would cross the Guadarama by the passes of Baños or Perales), he would expose the flank and rear of his line of march—especially if he did not take Ciudad-Rodrigo and

Almeida beforehand—to annoyance from the Allies. The roads also to the south of the mountains were known from the experience of Junot (who entered Portugal from Salamanca in 1807, by Alcantara, Castello-Branco, and Abrantes) to be so bad that it was with great difficulty an army could be got over them. Weighed against these disadvantages, was the fact that an advance from this direction (*e.g.* from Coria) would have enabled communication to be kept up with Joseph at Madrid, and with Soult, by Almaraz and Alcantara; and would have aided concentration and combined effort. Still, a consideration of all the drawbacks to the southern line fully accounts for Massena's adoption of that through Ciudad-Rodrigo and Almeida. If it be asked why he could not have advanced by *both lines* (*i.e.* by the N. and S. of the Guadarama at once), the answer is that such a division of his army would have weakened his strength needlessly, and that it was thought unnecessary to send a force to oppose Hill, as Soult was expected to occupy him.

But after Massena, following this line, had secured the strongholds of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Almeida, and driven in the Allies from their vicinity, he had again the opportunity of choosing, from out of some three or four directions, the best one for his advance.

He might—

- (1) Have forced the allied position at Guarda, crossed the Sierra Estrella to Belmonte, and followed the valley of the Zézere towards Thomar and Santarem.
- (2) Have advanced through Macal and Celorico, down the left bank of the Mondego.

- (3) Have advanced, as above, through Celorico, but then crossing the Mondego at Fornos moved down the right bank of the river.
- (4) Have made a détour by the valley of the Duero, and come down by the high road from Oporto to Coimbra.

The existence of the long mountain ridges in continuation of the Sierra Estrella stretching from Guarda towards Lisbon, and over which the roads are few, bad, and easily defended, almost forces an army approaching the Portuguese capital from the direction of Almeida to select at the outset which side of the ridge it will move by, and then adhere to it, for it can hardly count with any confidence upon being able to change from one side to the other at will.

Direction (1) would have obliged Massena to force the Sierra Estrella near Guarda, where the allied position was especially strong and could not easily be carried, and then to advance down the Zezere valley near the mountains, and by a bad road broken up and carefully watched.

Direction (2) was comparatively the most direct, but led over numerous mountain spurs, and was confined between them and the Mondego, and crossed by several small rivers. It also passed over the Sierra Murcella. It was described, however, to Massena, by some Portuguese of position, as being a far worse road than it in reality was, and he was deceived by their report.

Direction (3) led round by Viseu, and from that point either by a fair road to Sardao, and so to

Coimbra, or (which was the shorter route, but a very bad one) over the Sierra Busaco to Coimbra.

Direction (4) involved a long march, and the passage of the River Vouga.

It can be seen that the points at which Massena concentrated on the 16th September, viz., Guarda, Macal and Pinhel were well-selected as threatening an advance down each of the first three of the above directions; but from the description of the nature of the several routes open to him, it is evident that the knowledge possessed by Massena of the country, or of Wellington's position and power of concentrating his troops was very imperfect, or he would not have chosen the round-about road by Viseu which compelled him, by its difficulty, to march slowly (thus giving time for Leith and Hill to join Wellington); and thence taken the bad one to Busaco which from its direction forced him to abandon his most direct communication with Almeida, and compelled him in the end to fight his way past such an obstacle as the Sierra of Busaco. Napier implies that he would have done better in following road (2) down the left bank of the Mondego, and says that the difficulty of this road was overrated by Massena, while the road by Busaco, along which he did march, was one of the worst in Portugal. To gain accurate information regarding roads, &c., in an enemy's country is impossible without untiring exertion and running great danger; but the whole of the operations of this campaign show that hardly any sacrifice is too great to make for it.



Massena is also censured for disregarding the importance of making as rapid an advance *as possible* in order to force Wellington either to retire, yielding the strong positions N. of Coimbra, or to fight before Hill and Leith had joined. Napier says, that the badness of the road even did not justify his taking 10 days between reaching Guarda and leaving Viseu—that “age and honours had chilled him.” To strike rapidly is, of course, the true policy of any invading army.

It must always be a hazardous undertaking to enter a mountain pass like the Boyalva close to an enemy in position, because if attacked in front or rear while in the pass an army must be in great danger; but yet when Massena first arrived in front of the Allied position he might have turned it (as he did successfully on the 28th), and without any greater risk of loss to his army; but he was unaware of the existence of the road over the mountains at this point until after the battle, when the unfortunate nature of his position made him search carefully for any outlet from it.

Massena should have turned the position of Busaco at first.

Had the Portuguese Militia, as directed by Wellington, occupied the Boyalva pass, Massena would have been forestalled there; and if he could not have forced the pass or succeeded in a second attempt upon the Busaco ridge, or (after crossing the Mondego) in an assault upon the Sierra Murcella—in all of which undertakings the chances would have been greatly against him—he must have retired again to

Difficulties he would have been in had he failed in turning it.

Coimbra, after a long and fruitless march and a decided defeat. Wellington has been criticised, however, for having fought the battle of Busaco and lost men, when he meant to retreat within the Lines. He has also been criticised for having entrusted so important a point as the Boyalva pass to the occupation of Militia only; but, at a time of such general despondency as prevailed regarding the Allied cause, and with an army consisting largely of recruits, and composed of different nations, it was evidently of great consequence, in a first battle, to keep all the available regular troops in front of Massena at Busaco; and if the Militia had made no mistake and arrived at the pass in time, there is no reason to suppose that they could not have held it. The cavalry also posted on the road south of Sardao secured Wellington from being turned without knowing it; and rendered him, in any case, safe from the danger of surprise. What Wellington says himself on these points is very interesting:—

*To Right Honourable W. W. Pole.*

4th October, 1810.

“The croakers about useless battles will attack me again about that of Busaco, notwithstanding that our loss was really trifling; but I should have been inexcusable if, knowing what I did, I had not endeavoured to stop the enemy there; and I should have stopped him entirely if it had not been for the blunders of the Portuguese general commanding in the North, who was prevented by a small

“ French patrol from sending Traut by the road by  
 “ which he was ordered to march. If he had come  
 “ by that road the French could not have turned our  
 “ position, and they must have attacked us again ;  
 “ they could not have carried it, and they must have  
 “ retired. That which has since happened shows that  
 “ if not turned, I could have maintained it without  
 “ loss of importance, and that, if turned, I could retire  
 “ from it without inconvenience.—It has likewise re-  
 “ moved an impression which began to be very general  
 “ that we intended to fight no more, but to retire to our  
 “ ships ; and it has given the Portuguese troops a taste  
 “ for an amusement to which they were not before  
 “ accustomed, and which they would not have  
 “ acquired if I had not put them in a very strong  
 “ position.”

The secrecy with which the construction of the lines of Torres Vedras was carried on strikes one as almost inexplicable ; and says a great deal not only for the activity of Wellington's posts but for the patriotism of the Portuguese, without which not even the death punishment held over all who communicated with the enemy could have prevented some intelligence of what was going on reaching the French.

The ability with which Hill aided Wellington in the operations of this campaign,—now watching Reynier ; now (directly he knew that the latter had gone off to join Massena) hurrying by forced marches, and in anticipation of his orders, towards Wellington (thus reaching him in time for the battle of Busaco) ; now,

Secrecy as  
to the con-  
struction of  
the lines of  
Torres  
Vedras.

Remarks as  
to opera-  
tions of  
Generals  
Hill and  
Crawford

by ceaseless vigilance, preventing Massena from throwing a bridge, and affecting a passage over the Tagus into the fertile districts of the Alemtejo—have always been much praised. Promptitude and daring in action (qualities especially exemplified as we shall see further on, in the surprise of Almaraz in 1812), combined with a readiness to subordinate his own personal and minor operations to the furtherance of Wellington's general plan, always especially marked the character of Hill, rendering him conspicuously a model for soldiers. The bravery of Crawford in remaining out so long beyond the Coa (see page 101), was not apparently so much combined with a comprehensive appreciation of his leader's designs. In his despatches, Wellington had often cautioned him not to risk any serious engagement beyond the Coa, and yet he did engage, and fought also in such a bad position (*i.e.*, with a river, only to be passed by one bridge, in his rear), that his troops very narrowly escaped destruction. Wellington never blamed Crawford officially for this, but in his private correspondence, occurs the following letter:—

“ Although I shall be hanged for them, you may  
 “ be very certain that not only I have had nothing  
 “ to do with, but had positively forbidden the foolish  
 “ affairs in which Crawford involved his outposts.  
 “ I had positively desired him not to engage in any  
 “ affair on the other side of the Coa, and I repeated  
 “ my injunction that he should not engage in an  
 “ affair on the right of the river, in answer to a letter  
 “ in which he told me that he thought the cavalry

“ could not remain there without the infantry. After  
 “ all this he remained above two hours on his ground  
 “ after the enemy appeared in his front before they  
 “ attacked him, during which time he might have  
 “ retired across the Coa twice over, when he would  
 “ have been in a situation in which he could not  
 “ have been attacked. You will say, if this is the  
 “ case, why not accuse Crawford? I answer, because,  
 “ if I am hanged for it, I cannot accuse a man who I  
 “ believe has meant well, and whose error is one of  
 “ judgment and not of intention; and indeed I must  
 “ add, although my errors, and those of others also  
 “ are visited heavily upon me, that is not the way in  
 “ which any, much less a British army, can be com-  
 “ manded.”—(*Supplementary Correspondence of the  
 Duke of Wellington—Letter to the Honourable W. Pole,  
 Celorico, 31st July, 1810.*)

Soult, as we have seen, made no efficient attempt  
 in the campaign to aid Massena, and several reasons  
 have been assigned for this. Some writers have  
 accused him of jealousy of the other marshals, and  
 others of a preference for ruling quietly in Andalusia  
 where he kept up an almost kingly state; but the  
 more correct reasons are probably that the siege of  
 Cadiz, the pacifying of the province generally, and  
 the quelling the guerilla bands, who were becoming  
 very active, gave him, as he asserted, so much to  
 do that he was really unable to co-operate with  
 Massena, as had been intended.

Reasons for  
 Soult's  
 inaction.

The great value to an army acting on the defensive  
 of such works as those of Torres Vedras is well illus-

Excellence  
 of the lines

of Torres  
Vedras.

trated. These lines had almost all the advantages of perfect defensive works. They were strong by nature and art, but permitted the holders of them to move out freely if necessary, had their flanks secure, a good communication for the defenders in rear, and obstacles which interfered with the enemy's attacking them in front. They saved Portugal, and turned the scale of war against the French.

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## LECTURE VII.

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### CAMPAIGN OF 1811.

RETREAT OF MASSENA.—BATTLES OF FUENTES  
D'ONORO AND BADAJOZ.

THE operations of this campaign, though of the highest importance with regard to the result of the struggle for the freedom of the Peninsula, are not, taking them throughout, of a character well adapted to illustrate any of the broader movements of strategy. It was a campaign of battles and sieges, and of fighting in several quarters, and, although in the "Retreat of Massena," to which we are about to allude, there is much to study with advantage; the lessons taught by the campaign *generally* are those too completely beyond the scope of these lectures—to be at all thoroughly entered into. In order, however, to preserve the connection of events in the Peninsula war throughout, a sketch of what took place is given.

Character  
of the  
operations  
of this  
campaign.

It has been mentioned that Massena, when he found his passage to Lisbon barred by the Lines of Torres Vedras, while a long extent of half desolate and hostile country lay between him and his nearest supports, had sent General Foy to Napoleon imploring aid. Though Napoleon was at the moment at peace with all the Continental powers, and England was the only great nation still attempting to thwart him in his schemes of aggrandizement, he had already determined in his own mind upon an invasion of Russia, with which country his relations were far from amicable. Partly upon this account, and partly because he considered that the forces of Massena and Soult should be a match for the Allies, he refused to aid the former marshal further than by directing the latter to act vigorously in his support from the direction of Badajoz.

Napoleon  
directs  
Soult to aid  
Massena.

Soult  
marches to  
Badajoz.  
Takes it  
(French  
siege).

Returns to  
Cadiz.

Reason for  
his return.

In accordance with this order Soult very early in January, 1811, having left a force (under Victor) to keep up the blockade of Cadiz, marched towards Badajoz, invested it on 26th January, and took it from the Spaniards on the 10th March. This siege is called the *French siege of Badajoz*. But he had hardly captured this fortress when he was informed that his troops blockading Cadiz were in danger, and so leaving a garrison in Badajoz, he returned to aid them. This peril to the blockading force at Cadiz, which brought Soult back, arose as follows:—

An expedition, consisting of 5,000 British troops of the garrison of Cadiz, had left that harbour and gone by sea (under Sir Thomas Graham) to Tarifa, and there disembarking, and joining with a Spanish force, endeavoured to come upon the enemy block-

ading Cadiz in rear, and oblige them to raise the siege. These troops attacked the French under Victor at Barossa and routed him in the *Battle of Barossa* (5th March), but *no permanent result* was obtained, for General Graham, disgusted with the conduct of the Spaniards in the action, re-embarked and went back to Cadiz.

*Battle of Barossa.*

Active operations were now beginning to take place between the Allies and French, at about the same date, in two different quarters; for on the same day (5th March) on which the Battle of Barossa was fought near Cadiz, Massena commenced to retreat out of Portugal.

Up to this time he had remained in the position in which we left him at the close of 1810; the ground he occupied was strong, and strengthened by earth-works; and the hostile armies of the French and Allies had faced each other throughout January and February, divided only by a bridge at the end of a narrow causeway across a marsh, which was mined by the Allies, and on the other hand commanded by French guns. Massena had patiently waited for Soult, and Wellington (as we have said) for the exhaustion of his adversaries supplies.

*Situation of Massena since the close of 1810.*

We have spoken of the instructions issued before the allied retreat to the Lines to the Portuguese peasantry, directing them to destroy all their crops, as well as to carry off their cattle, so as to leave no food available for the French. This order was partially carried out, but *only* partially. One can understand the difficulty there must have been in enforcing such a decree under the circumstances of a hurried retreat, and the natural reluctance to obey it on the part of the

peasants. As a fact, although most of the mills, &c., were destroyed, the moveables carried off, and the country abandoned; (250,000 Portuguese retiring towards the lines and across the Tagus), yet large tracts of land covered with wheat remained untouched, especially near Santarem, so that Massena had been able to subsist his army longer than ought to have been the case.

Massena  
commences  
to retreat  
out of  
Portugal  
followed by  
Wellington.

But at last, by the 5th of March, his army had fallen into such great distress, and his necessities become so urgent, that he could delay no longer for Soult, and having heard also that reinforcements were arriving at Lisbon for Wellington (some 7,000 men landed), he at last gave way. After a feint to cross the Zezere and attack Abrantes, he blew up his works established at Punhete, with the view of constructing a bridge over the Tagus, and destroying some baggage and what guns he could not horse, commenced in the night his celebrated retreat out of Portugal.

The horrors of this retreat can hardly be exaggerated. As the French, pressed by Wellington, fell back through the inhospitable and wasted districts in their rear, they perished in great numbers, both from hunger and the sword, and in their fury and exasperation, marked their track by murder, rapine and burning villages.

Opening  
movements  
of the  
retreat.

Massena retired in two columns. Junot and Montbrun's cavalry, followed by Ney as rear guard, by Torres Novas on Leirya, making for Coimbra; Reynier by Thomar and Espinhal, making for Murcella.

A division of Ney's corps remained behind to com-

plete the destruction of the stores at Punhete, and then followed Reynier for some distance, afterwards branching off to Leirya.

By the 8th, the whole army was in full march, and some portion of it had gained a long distance on the road.

Wellington, as soon as he was sure that Massena was in full retreat, detached a portion of his men in the direction of Badajoz, having heard of the investment of that fortress by Soult, and with the rest of the army followed Massena, his divisions being sent through Thomar and Leirya, and joining at Pombal—one brigade only having from Thomar followed after Reynier towards Espinhal.

The French had gained nearly four days upon their pursuers, but on the night of the 10th, Wellington at Pombal came up with Ney, whose duty it was, as <sup>Wellington overtakes Ney at Pombal.</sup> commanding the rear guard and while the main body marched ahead of him, to keep back the Allies as long as possible by taking up good positions across the line of retreat (which Wellington must bring up his troops in order of battle to attack), and then retiring before the superior forces of his enemy could close and destroy him.

On the 10th, after a short skirmish and several manœuvres to delay the allies, Ney retired on Redinha, and there drew up on a height, showing such a bold front that Wellington, uncertain whether the whole French army was not behind him in support, was compelled to make detailed dispositions for the attack.

Detaching divisions to the right and left with a view of turning Ney's flanks, he intended to advance <sup>Combat at Redinha.</sup>



Ney  
retreats to  
Condeixa.

himself against the centre, when Ney, having delayed his progress as far as he dare, rapidly withdrew from the position, and decamped towards Condeixa.

Now, Massena had given Ney, whom he strengthened with a portion of Junot's corps, stringent orders to make a very determined stand in front of Condeixa, while he (Massena) sent Montbrun's cavalry to reconnoitre the roads towards Coimbra and Murcella before retiring further. Ney took up a position covering the place, but did not hold it with the obstinacy that the occasion demanded. The Allies came up in his front, and a division being detached to turn his left, he, in fear of being cut off from the road through Miranda to Murcella, set fire to Condeixa and retired.

Abandons  
that place,  
retiring to  
Cazal Nova.

Junot's corps was then ordered by Massena, as soon as he knew of Ney having abandoned the position, to Cazal Nova, and Ney followed it in that direction.

Critical  
situation of  
the French.

The French were now in a critical situation, Montbrun's cavalry which, on arriving near Coimbra, had found the bridge destroyed and the Portuguese in position on the right bank, could not fall back on Condeixa, but had to try and join the army by a circuitous and difficult route up the Deuca river towards Miranda, while Wellington, by moving two of his divisions round Ney's left flank, pressed the French hard, endeavouring to forestall them at Cazal Nova, to cut in, if possible, between Ney and Junot; and to be beforehand with Reynier at Miranda, who we may remember, was marching from Thomar by Espinhal on Murcella.

The Allies, however, though they caused great distress to the French, obliging them to destroy some



of their baggage, and very nearly succeeded in cutting off Ney from Junot, did not attain their main objects. Ney conducted the retreat very ably, showing fight in every available position, and on the 14th made a stand at Miranda, where he was joined by Montbrun's cavalry and Reynier—and whence (after burning the village), he retired in the night, covering the rest of the army, towards Foz d'Arouce.

Ney makes  
a stand at  
Miranda.

Retires to  
Foz  
d'Arouce.

Experience had now taught Wellington the strategems, and also the real strength of Ney; and as a consequence he pressed him vigorously from point to point. Every position the French assumed was quickly turned or attacked, and the retreat went steadily on. At Foz d'Arouce there was an engagement on the 15th with the Allies, after which Wellington sent off Beresford with a considerable force to recapture Badajoz, of the fall of which, on the 10th March, he had received intelligence—while he himself followed after Massena. From Foz d'Arouce the French retired behind the Alva, and finding the bridge over the Mondego cut, and the Portuguese on the right bank, were forced to keep to the left of the river.

Wellington  
sends  
Beresford  
to Badajoz.

French  
retire  
behind the  
Alva.

At Moita Wellington was obliged reluctantly to halt, as he had outrun all his supplies, and had to procure them from the mouth of Mondego. This gave Massena some breathing time, and on the 21st of March he had reached Celorico and Guarda.

And thence  
to Guarda.

Massena now determined to move by Sabugal and Pena Macor into the valley of the Tagus, instead of retiring on Almeida, on the road to which place he would probably be opposed by the Portuguese moving up the left bank of the Mondego, but Ney became

Plan of  
Massena.

Insubordi-  
nation of  
Ney.

insubordinate, and had marched, before he could be brought back, a short distance towards Almeida. This, and the fact of provisions becoming very scarce, caused delay, and prevented him from carrying out his resolve. Ney was deprived of his command, and Massena, attacked by Wellington at Guarda on March 29th, marched to Sabugal, but resolved to retreat, if pressed, not to Pena Macor but to Ciudad-Rodrigo.

Massena  
retires to  
Sabugal.

On the 1st April he was attacked by Wellington in his position near Sabugal, on the right bank of the Coa, and after a very sharp fight, in which his left was skilfully turned, crossed the Portuguese frontier on the 5th, fell back on Ciudad-Rodrigo, and thence retired to Salamanca.

And thence  
to Sala-  
manca.

Conclusion  
of retreat.

Thus he was driven out of Portugal, having lost, since he entered it, some 30,000 men, of whom about 20,000 died of starvation or disease; and Wellington, cantoning his troops on both banks of the Coa, invested Almeida (April 9), left them for a time in this position under the command of General Spencer, and set off towards Badajoz to join Beresford.

Wellington  
goes off to  
Badajoz.

Movements  
of Beresford  
and Soult.

We now turn for a moment to the movements of the latter. Having marched, as we have mentioned, from Foz d'Arouce, after the engagement there on 15th March, Beresford approached Badajoz, about 25th March, with some 20,000 men, at the time when Soult was away [having gone off to Cadiz, upon hearing of the battle of Barossa.] Before regularly investing the place, he had to construct a bridge for the passage of the Guadiana; and his troops were occupied in the capture of smaller places, and in an engagement with Mortier. This occupied some time,

and when Wellington, coming from his army in the north, reached him, he was just beginning to prepare actively for re-taking Badajoz. Wellington and he reconnoitred the fortress together on 22nd April, and the former after this returned at once northward, as <sup>Wellington returns</sup> he had heard that Massena was moving towards <sup>northwards.</sup> Almeida, leaving Beresford to proceed with the siege of Badajoz. Shortly after Wellington had left, Soult came forward to succour Badajoz, and Beresford, on his approach, was obliged to raise the siege and take up a position behind the river Albuera. This siege, which the approach of Soult interrupted, is called *the First English Siege of Badajoz*. Soult attacked <sup>First English</sup> Beresford in his position, and in the bloody *Battle of* <sup>siege of</sup> *Albuera* which now took place (16th May), the Allies <sup>Badajoz.</sup> were victorious, but sustained very heavy losses, and <sup>Battle of</sup> *Albuera.* Soult fell back towards Seville.

We have said that Wellington, about 22nd April, <sup>Movements of Massena.</sup> had left Beresford to return northwards. He joined the army there just in time to meet Massena, who, having heard of his (Wellington's) departure for the south, had collected all his available troops together, at Salamanca, and was making a last expiring effort to relieve Almeida. He crossed the Portuguese frontier on the 2nd May, and attacked Wellington, who had taken up a position covering the blockade of Almeida, and close to the village of Fuentes d'Onoro.

In the actions of *Fuentes d'Onoro* (3rd to 5th May), <sup>Battle of Fuentes d'Onoro.</sup> Massena failed to gain his object, and Almeida fell to Wellington on 10th May. Massena now again retired to Salamanca, where he was superseded by Marshal <sup>Massena retires to Salamanca and is</sup> Marmont, according to Napoleon's directions, in the command of the army. Wellington now once more

superseded  
by Mar-  
mont.

Second  
English  
siege of  
Badajoz.

Wellington  
retires to  
Elvas.

set off to the south to Beresford, and in person resumed the siege of Badajoz (called the *Second English Siege of Badajoz*): two assaults, however, against this fortress failed, and in the end, upon the approach of the French in large numbers, under Soult and Marmont (the latter having moved from Salamanca across the Tagus to join Soult), Wellington was compelled to retire, and withdrew in June, 1811, towards Elvas, where he was joined by Spencer from the north.

French  
armies  
separate.

Wellington  
moves to  
the Coa and  
blockades  
Ciudad-  
Rodrigo.

He now prepared to oppose the entry of the French into Portugal by this line; but Marmont and Soult had begun to find great difficulty in provisioning their armies, and exaggerating the strength of the Allies, as well as being aware of the resistance they would meet with, made no further attempt to invade Portugal, but after a few weeks separated, Soult going to Seville, and Marmont to Salamanca, while Wellington went northwards, cantoning his army once more on both banks of the Coa (10th August), and commencing the blockade of Ciudad-Rodrigo; a corps under Hill being left, as in the previous year, in the Alemtejo to guard that province and watch Elvas.

Interrup-  
tion and  
renewal  
of the  
blockade.

General  
situation

We need follow no further the operations of this year, except to say that in September, the French, advancing in strength, forced Wellington to retire, after a rather critical combat at Fuente Guinaldo, and give up the blockade of Ciudad-Rodrigo, after which, and provisioning the fortress well, they fell back again to Salamanca. Wellington then returned and resumed the blockade.

While the above operations were going on along

the frontiers of Portugal, the French, in other parts of Spain, had been actively employed in putting down the guerilla bands, which had, during this summer, risen to the greatest strength and power they ever attained.

of affairs at  
the end of  
1811.

Some successes were gained by the guerilla chieftains over detached bodies of the French, but in general the latter had increased their hold over the various provinces. By January, 1812, they had taken Valencia and Tarragona on the east coast, and (with the exception of Cadiz, Tarifa, and one or two other strongholds) now held possession of almost all the fortified places of Spain, including the important fortresses of *Ciudad-Rodrigo* and *Badajoz*.

On the other hand, the Allies had defeated every successive effort of the French to hold Portugal, [for Junot, Soult, and Massena had all failed to conquer that country,] and were in possession of the Portuguese fortresses of *Almeida* and *Elvas*.

The protraction of the war was each year making it more and more difficult for the French to subsist in the exhausted districts which had been the scene of the operations of their large armies, and they soon found themselves compelled to scatter their troops widely in search of food. It is upon this fact that the important events of the year 1812, which we are about to discuss, mainly turned.

With reference to the campaign of 1811, it may be useful to say that, before reading any large and detailed history of it, it is well worth while by consulting some such epitome (containing dates) as that given above, to get the connection of events clearly arranged in the mind.

Remarks as  
to the diffi-  
culty of  
connecting  
together the  
events of  
this  
campaign.

The fighting during certain months of 1811 was so universal, and Wellington appears in person near Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz, places widely distant, at dates so close together, that the accounts are at first a little confusing.

Wellington, it should be noticed (see dates in foregoing pages), after driving Massena out of Portugal, invested Almeida, April 9th, and then went south to Beresford. Massena came back to relieve that fortress, and fought the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro, May 3rd to 5th. Beresford and Wellington reconnoitred Badajoz, and prepared to besiege it (*1st English siege*), April 22nd; immediately after which Wellington left Beresford and returned towards Almeida, while Soult came forward to relieve Badajoz, and fought the battle of Albuera, May 16th; subsequently, Wellington came again from the north to Beresford to resume the siege of Badajoz (*2nd English siege*).

Between the date he left Beresford at Badajoz (22nd April), and Fuentes d'Onoro (May 3rd), Wellington had time to return again to the north and fight Massena at Fuentes d'Onoro. Thus it is that he is heard of as being, within a few days' time, at both Badajoz and Fuentes d'Onoro. He had, however, left Beresford to return northward before the latter was attacked (May 16), at Albuera, in which battle Beresford commanded the Allies.

#### REMARKS.

Consideration of the lines of retreat chosen by Massena.

In considering the retreat of Massena from the lines of Torres Vedras, we ought to reflect upon whether, in falling back by the line he did, he chose the best course open to him.



When he broke up from Santarem he might have retired by the following lines :—

1st. Across the Zezere to Vilha Velha, and thence by Castel-Branco and Covia towards Madrid (to join Joseph).

2nd. By the Sobriera Formosa Mountains to Castello-Branco, and thence by Pena Macor and Sabugal to Almeida.

3rd. By the road he took, *i. e.*, by Pombal and Leiria towards Coimbra.

If he had retired by the 1st line he would have been able more easily to communicate with Soult, and would have drawn the Allies away from any attack on Almeida or Ciudad-Rodrigo. This would have been a great advantage. On the other hand, the roads, as we have before mentioned over which he must have marched, were very indifferent and the country barren. It would not have been practicable, perhaps, to have transported his artillery readily, and as the Allies were about Abrantes, and could move on the left bank of the Tagus from thence to Vilha Velha by a good road, they might have forestalled him either from Abrantes or Vilha Velha or fallen upon him in flank as he marched.

If he had retired by the 2nd line he was certain of encountering very bad roads, broken up at points by Wellington, and again he would have been in danger of the Allies crossing the Tagus and taking him in flank or rear.

In retiring by the 3rd line he avoided any great risk from the Allies near Abrantes, and when he got to and occupied Coimbra he could decide whether to proceed towards Oporto, or wait there, or retire to Al-

meida according to circumstances. The roads by this line were also not so bad as by the others.

Upon the whole, the line chosen by Massena appears to have been beset by the present dangers.

As he fell back we should notice the points which became immediately of strategical importance.

Important  
strategical  
points.

Condeixa for instance was one. The only fair roads to Murcella and Coimbra branched off at this spot, and it was therefore of great importance that Ney should have held his position in front of it stoutly on the 13th.

By his hasty retreat, Massena was prevented from passing on the baggage of a great part of his force towards Casal Nova and had to destroy it. Montbrun's cavalry also was cut off and driven to a perilous march over paths and bye-roads. There seems to be no doubt from the general view taken of the matter by others at the time, that Ney, who was personally against a march anywhere but to Almeida, and on bad terms with Massena, did not desire to do his utmost at this junction, and that here again the French army suffered by the jealousy and want of unity amongst its semi-independent chiefs. Still it is also certain that he was in great danger of having his position turned by the Allies.

The importance of this bridge at the point at Coimbra, where a line of retreat crossed the river should be noticed. We recollect how the neglect of such a simple precaution as breaking the bridge of Ponte Nova was the means of Soult's escape in 1809. Massena had entertained, it is said, the intention of

crossing if he could manage it at Coimbra, and waiting on the right bank of the Mondego for reinforcements. The destruction of the bridge and the position taken on the right bank by the Portuguese would have alone made this difficult to accomplish; but when, in addition, Wellington was close on the rear, and Ney in retreat to Miranda, it of course became impracticable. It was, of course, the object of the Allies to keep Massena on the left bank of the Mondego, where the roads were confined and crossed by a good many rivers.

When Massena, after arriving at Guarda on the 21st March, resolved to retire by Sabugal and Pena Macor to the valley of the Tagus, he seems to have chosen the most honorable and best outlet left to him from his difficulties. If he could have successfully executed this plan, not only could he have avoided the appearance of a complete retreat, but might, by joining with Joseph and Soult, have threatened Wellington with a serious advance by the valley of the Tagus, which would almost certainly have drawn him away at once from Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo. Ney's open resistance though at this moment prevented the plan from being carried out.

Discussion  
of Mas-  
sena's plan  
of retiring  
to the  
Tagus  
valley.

It has been considered by some, that after the expulsion of Massena from Portugal, too much was attempted by the Allies in endeavouring to retake Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo in the north, and also Badajoz in the south, at the same time; and that it would have been safer to have attempted nothing towards Badajoz (except observing it and Soult) until after Ciudad-

Rodrigo had fallen—the main effort being concentrated against the latter place, and fewer men sent with Beresford. Certainly, these attempts to take Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz did not at this time succeed, but we shall show in the next campaign how others, apparently just as difficult, did. °

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## LECTURE VIII.

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### CAMPAIGN OF 1812.

FIRST PERIOD.—CAPTURE OF CIUDAD-RODRIGO AND  
BADAJOZ, AND SURPRISE OF ALMARAZ.

At the close of 1811 Napoleon had attained to the highest pinnacle of his power and greatness, and had largely reinforced his armies in Spain, but the events which one by one led to his downfall were already about to commence. He had just resolved upon his celebrated invasion of Russia, and to furnish troops for this enterprise, he withdrew from Spain (in December, 1811), about 20,000 of his soldiers, including the Imperial Guard, and it became certain that he himself would conduct in person the war with Russia.

The French armies in Spain, even after the departure of the troops for Russia, very far outnumbered the forces of the Allies. Two hundred and fifty thousand French soldiers, under various marshals, were distributed over the Peninsula in its different

Napoleon  
resolves  
upon war  
with  
Russia.

State of the  
French  
armies in  
Spain.

provinces ; but as the country had been greatly exhausted by the large armies which for years had fed upon it, the French—a point important to notice—*had been obliged to disperse their troops over extended districts in order to obtain sustenance.* The guerilla bands had also become very active in the Asturias and the northern provinces of Spain, and their attacks had obliged the French commanders to detach largely in order to guard their communications.

Thus towards the closing days of December, 1811, the French, after having remained in winter quarters in comparative inactivity for some three months, were distributed as follows:—

Their distribution.

1st.—*The Army of the North*, under Dorsenne, about 48,000—in wide cantonments along the river Pisuerga, with one division (under Bonnet) in the Asturias, and others in the districts about St. Ander and St. Sebastian, employed in suppressing the guerilla bands.

2nd.—*The Army of Portugal*, under Marmont, about 50,000—also in wide cantonments in the valley of the Tagus (about Plasencia, Toledo, and other points), and two divisions detached to a distance towards Valencia, to aid the French who, under Marshal Suchet, were occupying that province. Marmont had, however, *received orders* to move with his army to Salamanca and Valladolid, for the great line of communication with France was so much weakened by the dispersion of the army of the North, that it was considered necessary by Napoleon to bring Marmont closer towards it. The fortress of Ciudad-Rodrigo was held by a weak French garrison, and the army of



the North was considered sufficient to watch it at present, and prevent its being laid siege to by Wellington.

When, however, Marmont reached Salamanca, he was to be entrusted with the protection of this fortress, and also to assume command of Bonnet's division of the army of the North, which occupied the Asturias.

3rd.—*The Army of the South*, under Soult, about 55,000, in occupation of Andalusia, and garrisoning the fortress of Badajoz.

4th.—*The Army of the Centre*, under Joseph, about 19,000—around Madrid.

Other troops, whose positions we need not detail, were quartered at various points throughout Spain, holding the country, and endeavouring to keep open the communications.

The greater part of the Anglo-Portuguese army, under Wellington, about 50,000 strong, was at this time cantoned upon both banks of the Coa, and garrisoned the fortress of Almeida. For health's sake, and for the convenience of supply, it also, like the French armies, had spread over a large district.

Distribu-  
tion of the  
Allied  
army.

A force, under Hill, about 10,000, was in the Alemtejo, guarding that province, and protecting the fortress of Elvas, which was held by the Allies.

Although Wellington, by the dispersion of his troops and quiet attitude along the banks of the Coa, did not appear to be bent upon any offensive movement, but rather to be entirely occupied with the

Impatience  
of Well-  
ington to  
begin ac-  
tive opera-  
tions.

care and provisioning of his own army, and with his watch over the Portuguese frontier, he, in reality, had been longing with impatience for the moment when he might fall with some prospect of success upon his adversaries.

The advantages which he now possessed over the French.

1st, a more concentrated position.

He had at this time, in two points, advantages over the French. These points were

1st. A *comparatively concentrated position*, for though his forces were scattered, they were not nearly so much so as those of his enemy. He himself, on the river Coa and about Almeida, was hardly more (at the most extreme points of his position) than 100 miles from Hill near Elvas, while the three French armies (of the North, Portugal and the South) were extended from the Asturias down to Cadiz, covering about 500 miles of territory. He could thus collect his whole army in a few days, while the scattered forces of the French could not unite for a combined operation for nearly two months.

2nd, a greater facility of obtaining supplies.

2nd. A greater power of *obtaining and forwarding supplies*, which is equivalent to a power of operating more quickly. The attention of Napoleon had been for some time mainly absorbed by his difficulties with Russia, and he had latterly expected his armies in the Peninsula to support themselves almost entirely upon the country which they were occupying. As a consequence of this, some of the provinces had been so much reduced by the devastations and exactions of the troops, that the resources of the soil had become almost exhausted. The peasants also, had in many cases abandoned the land and joined the guerilla parties in the mountains, thus leaving the ground

uncultivated. From all these causes, it resulted that the French, often in the greatest distress from want of food, were compelled to scatter in all directions in order to live; and although they might concentrate for any pressing operation, yet unless they could carry it through rapidly, they were forced to give it up and spread themselves out again over the land.

Wellington, on the contrary, though often harassed by a deficiency of food and carriage, was in no similar difficulties. He had the navigable portions of the Duero, the Mondego and the Tagus, over which to bring his supplies from the sea; and the great harbours of Lisbon and Oporto to which the English ships had free access. All his energies had also been bent during the winter, towards improving and extending the navigation of these rivers, and the Duero was being rapidly made navigable, as far as its confluence with the river Agueda.

The efforts he made to improve the water communication of his army.

The Mondego also was available for water-carriage to within 100 miles of the Portuguese frontier; and the Tagus as far as Abrantes. Thus, in operating by either Almeida or Elvas, Wellington could bring his supplies by water to within a comparatively short distance of these fortresses, and although the land carriage over the intervening ground was of a difficult nature, his position, regarding supplies, was one of decided advantage over the French.

Moreover, the regularity with which everything was now paid for by the British, made the population of Portugal ready and eager to bring them all necessities.

Wellington considers it necessary to take Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz.

Before he could commence any lengthened operations in Spain and turn the above advantages to account, Wellington considered it necessary to wrest from the French the fortresses of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz.

There are few who have not heard, or read, of the celebrated captures by assault of these fortresses, where English heroism was so brilliantly exemplified, and English lives were offered up in hundreds. The attempt to take them from the French, had been for months meditated by Wellington, and was now on the eve of accomplishment, and in the remarks made further on it will be mentioned *why* it was, that, provided they were secured, he did not consider even a very large sacrifice of life in the small army which he commanded, too high a price to lay down for their possession.

Secret preparations made for their capture.

As he deemed it so essential to secure these fortresses very great pains had been taken to prepare secretly for their capture. A powerful battering train, with equipage complete, had been prepared some months beforehand at Lisbon, and ostentatiously embarked at that harbour as if for England. At sea it was shifted into smaller boats, and conveyed to Oporto and from thence, up the Duero and by land, to Lamego. From this point it was subsequently introduced with safety into Almeida; and so quietly had this operation been conducted, that neither the English nor the French armies suspected that any siege was in contemplation, and the latter imagined that the guns were only intended to arm and strengthen Almeida, as a cover to the extended position on the Coa occupied by Wellington.

The health of the Allied armies had been very indifferent for some time after they had first occupied their cantonments about the Coa; the pay had been long in arrears; the equipment bad; and, generally, the army had hardly been in a condition to move.

Sickness of the Allied army on the Coa.

The French knew of this, but they did not know that in the month of December (after the cessation of the rains) the sickness had stopped, that supplies had become abundant, and that, in all things the efficiency of the Allied army had much improved. This was a great advantage to Wellington. He was ready, by the close of December, to commence operations, and the French, ignorant of this change in his circumstances, were resting in fancied security. The scattered positions which their troops had assumed, as well as the probability that the Russian war would prevent Napoleon from sending reinforcements into the Peninsula, gave to him the opportunity he had so long sought and prepared for, and he immediately seized upon it.

Its health improves, and Wellington is ready to move forward.

Towards the end of December, 1811, he caused General Hill to advance into Estremadura, in order to attract the attention of Soult; and at the same time ordered his own troops to prepare fascines and gabions in their several villages, and to lay down upon the river Agueda a portable trestle bridge which had been secretly constructed in the fortress of Almeida. The advance of Hill towards Soult caused that marshal (as was intended) to take alarm for the safety of Badajoz, and he at once began to concentrate all his troops in Andalusia for a march in that direction, while Wellington, breaking up from

Causes Hill to advance and threaten Soult.



Lays siege  
to Ciudad-  
Rodrigo.

his cantonments in the north, suddenly passed the Agueda (9th January, 1812), and commenced the *Siege of Ciudad-Rodrigo*.

Necessary  
to carry it  
by assault.

It had been calculated that twenty-four days would be required for the subjugation of this fortress, but it having become known that Marmont was *already on his march* from the valley of the Tagus towards Salamanca (carrying out the orders he had received, it was evident that there was no time for the reduction of the place by the regular process of a siege, and so, after twelve days, as soon as a tolerably practicable breach was formed, it was ordered (on the evening of the 19th January) to be carried by storm.

Fall of  
Ciudad-  
Rodrigo.

The assault was pushed with the most desperate courage, and the place yielded to the Allies; Marmont's battering train, 150 guns, and an immense quantity of stores falling into their hands.

Movements  
of the  
French.

Marmont had arrived at Valladolid with a small portion of his force on the 11th January, but did not even hear of the Allies having passed the Agueda until the 15th. As soon as this intelligence reached him, he made every effort to pour succour towards the fortress. Bonnet from the Asturias, his own army from the valley of the Tagus, the divisions detached towards Valencia, and Dorsenne with the army of the North, were all urged on to move towards Salamanca, where it was hoped that they could concentrate by the 1st February; but it was too late. By the time that Marmont arrived, Ciudad-Rodrigo had fallen, the breaches had been repaired, provisions and a Spanish garrison had been thrown



in, and the Allies had retired. Marmont's battering train having been captured, he had no immediate prospect of recovering the fortress, and so fell back again to Valladolid, and to points in the valley of the Tagus. Shortly afterwards, upon receiving orders from Napoleon he moved again to Salamanca. The other French armies (which he had summoned to concentrate with him) assumed much their old positions at the opening of the campaign, and the Allies also took up their former ground about the Coa.

After the capture of Ciudad-Rodrigo, Lord Wellington was made an Earl by the English government, and Duke of Ciudad-Rodrigo by Spain, and the Portuguese also created him Marquis of Torres Vedras in Portugal. Wellington created an Earl, &c.

One half only, however, of the prize sought for by Wellington had yet been gained, and he now turned his attention towards Badajoz. He prepares to surprise Badajoz.

This fortress was of greater strength than Ciudad-Rodrigo, and Wellington knew that he must march with nearly his whole force to reduce it, and that the French marshals, now aroused from their indifference, were narrowly watching his movements. Before moving, he had to see that Ciudad-Rodrigo was sufficiently provisioned to hold out during his absence; that arrangements were made for the supplies of his army upon the march, the country being much exhausted; and that depôts of provisions were formed in the North to be available on the return of his troops. He had, moreover, to get his battering train as close as possible to Badajoz without attracting attention. For these reasons his preparations were carried on Necessity for arrangements and secrecy.

with redoubled secrecy, and the following skilful *ruses* were had recourse to—

Ruses resorted to.

To blind the enemy, as well as to ensure supplies, depôts were established at Celorico and places beyond the Duero, and every outyard preparation was made that would have been resorted to had operations past Ciudad-Rodrigo been intended. At the same time a pontoon train (to pass the river Guadiana) was sent by water from Lisbon to Abrantes, and carts ordered to convey it to Elvas. A siege equipage also was embarked at Lisbon in ships bound nominally for Oporto, but which, altering their course at sea, sailed southwards and landed it at Setuval, whence it was conveyed in boats up the river Sadao to Alcaçer do Sal, and thence by carts to Elvas.

Wellington moves upon Badajoz.

Engineer officers in Elvas, under pretence of strengthening that fortress, prepared fascines and gabions, and at length, in the first week of March everything was in readiness, and the army put in motion, Wellington remaining behind with his head quarters on the Coa to the last moment, in order to deceive the French. On the 9th March, he himself set out for Badajoz, leaving only some cavalry behind to watch Ciudad-Rodrigo.

Invests the fortress.

The army crossed the Tagus on the 9th and 10th by a bridge of boats at Vilha Velha. On the 16th a pontoon bridge was thrown over the Guadiana, and on the 17th, after a needless delay caused by the Portuguese failing to provide carriages, Badajoz was invested; a force under Hill of 30,000, being posted about Merida and Almandralejos, to cover the siege against Soult.

The French were completely surprised by the sudden investment of Badajoz; but nevertheless, as in the case of Ciudad-Rodrigo, their rapid movements to relieve it made it necessary for Wellington to carry the fortress by assault.

Soult was approaching from Seville, and Marmont from Salamanca moved forward, and threatened Ciudad-Rodrigo, which the Spaniards with their usual dilatoriness had failed to put into a perfectly complete state of defence. On this account, fearing that Ciudad-Rodrigo might fall, and in order to forestall Soult, Wellington assaulted the breaches of Badajoz at the first practicable moment, and, after a fearful carnage, the fortress was carried on the 7th April. This siege is called *the third English siege of Badajoz*.

Soult, on that day, was approaching Hill's position with an intention to attack it, when hearing of the fall of Badajoz, and knowing that he was unable to fight both Hill and Wellington combined, he fell back again and retired towards Seville.

Marmont had now invested Ciudad-Rodrigo, and entered the province of Beira; and so Wellington, leaving 10,000 men to repair and hold Badajoz, returned at once to oppose him. The French marshal, who had also heard that Badajoz had fallen, retreated on his approach, and placed his army once more in cantonments along the banks of the Duero—the Allies resuming their old position on the Coa.

Both armies now remained in cantonments for some weeks. The British required rest, and the exhausted state of the country rendered operations difficult be-

fore the green crops would supply forage for the horses. During this interval Wellington, by a determined exertion of authority, prevailed upon the Spanish and Portuguese Governments to strengthen, victual, and properly garrison the recently captured fortresses, which he threatened to blow up unless his wishes were executed. He also made strenuous efforts to accumulate supplies; pushed on preparations for a meditated advance into Spain; and in the month of May was again ready to move forward.

In May  
Wellington  
again ready  
to advance.

French po-  
sition at  
this time—  
especially  
Marmont's.

By this date, Marmont had strengthened Salamanca by the construction of forts capable of sustaining a siege; and had also fortified Zamora and Toro upon the Duero, and was holding the country between Salamanca and Valladolid. The other French armies held much the old positions before the opening of the campaign, Bonnet was again in the Asturias, and the army of the North, of the Centre, and of the South, in nearly the old places, and all greatly scattered.

Wellington  
decides to  
move  
against  
Marmont.

Wellington having determined to carry on operations in Spain, had next to decide whether he should move against Marmont, Joseph or Soult; and he determined to move against Marmont.

Resolves to  
surprise the  
French  
works at  
Almaraz.

Before commencing his operations, however, he resolved to attempt a daring surprise, in order to render the communication between Soult on the south bank of the Tagus, and Marmont or Joseph on the north, longer and more difficult. Soult's pontoon train had been captured in Badajoz, and during the various movements made in the last years of the war, every permanent bridge upon the Tagus, across which good

roads led, had been destroyed by one or other of the hostile armies. Between Toledo and the frontier of Portugal there was now but one good and easy passage over the river, which was by a bridge of boats which the French had constructed at Almaraz, and for the defence of which they had erected some strong enclosed works. A French force guarded these works, but Wellington determined to make an effort to surprise them. Hill, who was then near Badajoz, and who had given many proofs during the autumn of 1811, of his ability for this sort of service, was ordered to undertake the enterprise. As in the advance upon Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz, so it was necessary in this case also, to endeavour to deceive the French, and for this reason it was reported that an invasion of Andalusia was intended; a bridge was thrown over the Guadiana at Merida, nominally for the passage of the battering train from Elvas, and the Portuguese militia moved into the Alemtejo, *i.e.*, in the direction of Andalusia. Again the enemy was completely deceived. Hill suddenly made forced marches to Almaraz, and, by great good-fortune and brilliant courage combined, surprised the defenders of the bridge, took the works, blew them up, destroyed the bridge, and retreated again towards Badajoz in safety.

Conduct  
and success  
of the  
enterprise.

Communi-  
cation  
between  
Soult and  
Marmont  
thus made  
longer.

Thus the communication between Soult, and Joseph or Marmont, was lengthened; and the surprise was also of this further advantage to Wellington, that French troops being no longer about Almaraz, he was enabled, without the enemy hearing of it, to repair the bridge at Alcantara, and thus unknown to the French obtained an *easier communication with Hill*

Wellington  
also repairs  
the bridge  
at Alcantara  
shortening his  
communi-  
cation with  
Hill.



(and shorter by many days) than he had formerly possessed by Vilha Velha.

Every preparation possible before moving into Spain had now been completed; and Hill's corps was strengthened to 20,000, to enable him to hold his own for a time against Soult. It had been further arranged that some Spanish troops in Galicia should distract the Army of the North by threatening the northern provinces; and that an expedition composed of British and Spaniards should occupy the French in the east of Spain by a descent on the coast of Valencia or Catalonia. All things then being in readiness, Wellington, on the 13th of June, passed the Agueda and commenced his celebrated campaign of Salamanca.

Passes the Agueda and commences the Campaign of Salamanca.

Before discussing the further operations of this year (which form, what may be termed the 2nd period of the campaign), it is better, perhaps, to remark upon those which we have already detailed.

#### REMARKS.

Strategical importance of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz.

The strategical importance of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz to both the French and Allies, can hardly be over-estimated. It was on account of this importance that Wellington was so anxious to secure them.

Reasons for this importance.

The existence of these fortresses upon the two main roads connecting Spain with Portugal, made their value inestimable. They were, so to speak, the gates through which an army operating from Spain into Portugal, or from Portugal into Spain, must pass; and while they were held by an enemy, no movement could be made beyond either, unless a



sufficiently large force could be left to surround and keep its garrison within the walls; unless such a force were left, no supplies could pass in safety along the great high roads leading past these strongholds. Therefore (1), as long as the French held these two fortresses, Wellington, who did not command a very large army, was *unable to make an offensive movement into Spain*; and yet until such a movement could be made, it was evident that there could be no deliverance for the Peninsula.

In addition to this (2), the French, by occupying the fortresses were in a position at any time to *threaten an invasion of Portugal by two different lines*, and the Allies were not sufficiently strong to oppose them in proper strength on both at once. Thus, if Soult concentrated the Army of the South towards Badajoz, and threatened an advance upon Elvas (and so through the Alemtejo upon Lisbon) Wellington would be obliged to leave Almeida and move southwards, thus uncovering the road past this last fortress to Marmont or Dorsenne. In the same way, if Marmont, or Dorsenne advanced upon Almeida, and threatened Portugal with an attack from that direction, Wellington must oppose them, and therefore Hill's corps and the fortress of Elvas would be left unsupported against Soult.

Again (3) these fortresses were strong in themselves, and afforded good depôts for supplies.

Also in Ciudad-Rodrigo the whole siege equipage of Marmont's army had been deposited, and the French had no other nearer than Madrid. Its capture would thus render a siege of Almeida impossible for a long period.

Not sufficient to capture one only of these fortresses.

It can be seen also that it would not be sufficient for Wellington to capture *only one* of these fortresses, for the possession of a single one would not enable him to undertake operations to any advantage against the French. For instance, if he took Ciudad-Rodrigo and then moved past it against Dorsenne or Marmont, an advance on the part of Soult from Badajoz upon Elvas would compel him to return again to save Lisbon. In the same way, if he took Badajoz only, he could not move far against Soult, as an attack upon Almeida would force him to turn back again towards the north. It is also evident that he dare not operate by the line followed in the Talavera campaign (*i.e.* by Plasencia and the valley of the Tagus, upon Madrid), for while the French held these fortresses they had it in their power to threaten him with an invasion of Portugal, or an attack in flank. Thus, so long as these fortresses were in French hands, they were a standing menace to Portugal, they confined Wellington to a weak defensive attitude within that kingdom, and they afforded a screen behind which the French armies could move about and change their position in safety. But provided they could be seized by Wellington, the whole character of the latter's situation in Portugal was changed. He could then completely turn the tables upon the French, and from behind these fortresses threaten their dispersed armies with an advance from several directions—turning to account the superiority of situation, which, from the existence of the parallel mountain chains traversing the Peninsula from east to west (see Lecture I., remarks), his present position gave him over his enemy. The French would be in uncertainty

whether he would advance up the valley of the Duero, the Tagus, or the Guadiana, and, in addition to being obliged to watch all these separated river basins, they had now to scatter greatly in search of food. As we have explained in the opening pages of this campaign, Wellington, from his more concentrated position and better situation with regard to supplies, could expect to move with greater rapidity than the French; and, therefore, Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz once taken, he would have every reason to hope that in spite of the superior numbers of his enemy, he would be able to bring an equal force against any part of their extended line which he designed to attack.

Some of the chief circumstances which may render a siege necessary are here shown to us. If an army is large enough to blockade a fortress, confining its garrison closely within the walls, and at the same time pass on in sufficient strength to meet the enemy in the open field, the capture of the fortress may become unnecessary, and its value to its possessor is proportionately less, but to do this requires a very large army.\* In the case before us the Allied army was too weak to blockade and pass the fortresses, and the French too much open to attack to afford to lose them, and thus everything combined to make their seizure necessary to Wellington. Sieges are not undertaken at random, and to besiege a fortress, the possession of which is of no clear advantage, is but a waste of time and life.

Illustration  
of circum-  
stances  
which may  
render  
sieges  
necessary.

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\* In the late war with France the German army surrounded the fortress of Metz, and passed on towards Paris, but they had to leave over 200,000 men out of their enormous army about Metz in order to do so.

Illustrations of stratagems in war.

The stratagems or ruses often resorted to in war to deceive an enemy are illustrated in the steps taken by Wellington to blind the French as to his designs upon Ciudad-Rodrigo, Badajoz, and the bridge at Almaraz. The secret and skilful manner in which his preparations and movements were made, and the daring blows he struck, prove his genius and vigour as a general, and completely refute the charges of over-caution and slowness which (principally by foreign critics) have been sometimes laid to his charge. Marmont, taught by the loss of Ciudad-Rodrigo, had felt a little uneasy about Badajoz, and communicated his fears to Napoleon, but the latter wrote—"You must suppose the *English mad* to imagine that they will march upon Badajoz, leaving you at Salamanca"—i.e., in a situation to get to Lisbon before them. Yet Wellington not only made this march, but succeeded in taking Badajoz.

Napoleon deceived in the attack upon Badajoz.

Illustrations of important strategical points.

Badajoz and Ciudad-Rodrigo were in this campaign both instances of "important strategical points" for the reasons detailed above; so also was the fortified bridge at Almaraz, for upon its possession or loss depended the question of whether the French on the N. and S. of the Tagus could or could not unite together quickly to oppose Wellington.

Reasons why Wellington advanced against Marmont.

When Wellington, after the capture of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz, had to decide whether he would advance against Marmont, Joseph or Soult he determined to advance against Marmont for these reasons: 1st. The direction of this attack would threaten the French in a vital point, viz., the line

of communication through Valladolid and Bayonne. 2nd. If successful, it would draw up Soult from the south, and the other armies from the N. and E. to succour Joseph and Madrid, which would then be in danger. Thus Andalusia would be freed ; whereas, if Soult were attacked the other armies would only be drawn toward that province to his aid, and fasten more firmly upon it. The intention of the intended advance was in fact very similar to that of Sir John Moore in 1809. How it succeeded will be presently seen.

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## LECTURE IX.

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### CAMPAIGN OF 1812, CONTINUED.

(2ND PERIOD.)—CAMPAIGN OF SALAMANCA.

Wellington crosses the Tormes.

AFTER passing the Agueda, Wellington moved on to the river Tormes and crossed it (June 17th) by fords above and below Salamanca, and Marmont, having thrown a strong garrison into the forts protecting Salamanca, fell back before him in order to collect his scattered forces upon the Duero.

Invests the forts at Salamanca.

Wellington then invested the forts, and though Marmont returned with a portion of his army and manœuvred for some days upon the Tormes, in the hope of preventing their capture, it was in vain, and they fell to Wellington on the 26th.

Captures the forts.

Marmont then took up a position behind the river Duero, and Wellington blew up the forts and followed him.

Both armies take position along the Duero.

After some changes both armies, on the 8th July, faced each other, as follows, upon the Duero :—

French position.

Marmont's right was at Toro; his centre at Tordesillas; his left at Simancas on the Pisuerga River.



Over the river Duero there was but one bridge [viz., that at Tordesillas] left standing; but at Pollos and some other points there were fords. Over the river Pisuerga bridges existed at Simancas and Valladolid which were commanded by field-works; but this river was not fordable.

100 cannon guarded the line.

Wellington had drawn up his army facing the French.

His left was on the Guarena River; his centre on <sup>English</sup> the Trabancos River, and his right at Rueda. <sup>position.</sup> He had posts also near Tordesillas and opposite Pollos.

In this situation the armies remained for some days; for the waters of the Duero were very high, the fords difficult, and the French position a strong one. Wellington, though he made arrangements for forcing a passage, if necessary, was in hopes that Marmont, who was, he knew, in want of stores and magazines, would have to retire again and scatter for food. In this, however, he was disappointed. Marmont held on; and the position of Wellington was becoming in his own judgment untenable. Bonnet had (on the 8th) joined Marmont from the Asturias. A portion of the army of the North (10,000) was said to be rapidly approaching; and it was reported also that Joseph, with the army of the centre, was on his way from Madrid, with the intention of threatening the allied line of communication through Salamanca.

Marmont himself put an end to this suspense by <sup>Marmont</sup> assuming the offensive. Jealousy prevented the <sup>assumes the</sup> French marshals from having any trust in each <sup>offensive.</sup>

other, and from answers which he had received to his letters he imagined that it was very doubtful if either Joseph or the army of the North would really come to his assistance; and being afraid that, if he waited, Hill would join Wellington, and both attack him together, he broke up from his position, and on the 15th July commenced a series of operations, with the object of out-manceuvring his adversary.

Movements  
July 15th  
and 16th.

These movements of Marmont were conducted with great skill, and form the most interesting part of the Salamanca campaign.

On the 15th and 16th July he suddenly moved his army towards Toro, and with part of it crossed the river at that point, and advanced at some little distance, intending apparently to turn Wellington's left, and march upon Salamanca.

Wellington became aware of this on the 16th, and united his centre and left at Canizal during the night, intending to attack those who had passed at Toro. As he was, however, doubtful as to Marmont's real object, he did not completely close in his right wing to his centre, but only brought it in towards it as far as the Trabancos River, in order that it might still watch the country on its right of the Trabancos.

Marmont's  
movements  
only a feint.

This movement of Marmont towards Toro had been made as a blind, in order to draw away the Allies from the points of Tordesillas and Pollos, so that these passages over the Duero might be left open.

Movements  
on 17th.

On the 17th, the French general made a forced march back again along the right bank of the river, crossed it at Pollos and Tordesillas, and by night-fall had concentrated his whole army at Nava del Rey,

some of his troops having marched forty and others fifty miles without a halt.

He had thus succeeded in his design of passing the Marmont passes the Duero unopposed. Duero.

Wellington had gone to Toro to observe the French movements, and was there when, late at night on the 17th, he was informed of Marmont's change of position, and of the dangerous proximity of the enemy to his own right wing on the river Trabancos. It would have been perilous for Wellington to have left his right wing exposed to the French army until the left and centre could join it. On this account, he now ordered it to fall back towards the Guarena, and proceeded to concentrate his whole army behind that river. In this movement—which was carried out on the 18th—Movements on the 18th. the right wing of the Allies was closely pressed by the French, but it effected its junction safely with the rest of the army. An attempt made by Marmont to force a passage of the Guarena was defeated; and upon the 19th, both armies faced each other along the banks 19th. of this stream, opposite to, and a little below, Canizal.

It was Wellington's object to cover the town of Salamanca and also the road to Ciudad-Rodrigo. To reach this road, Marmont had to pass the Tormes river, over which fords existed at the points of Santa Marta, Aldea Lengua, Huerta, and Alba. Object of Wellington's position.

The ford at Alba was, as Wellington thought, secured, as there was a fort commanding it, which was occupied by a Spanish garrison. He trusted also to

being able to reach Huerta, or the other fords, with equal or greater speed than his adversary.

He was therefore under no apprehension regarding any attempt on Marmont's part to turn his right and outmarch him to these fords upon the Tormes.

He under-  
rates Mar-  
mont's skill.  
His error as  
to the ford  
at Alba.

In this instance, he under-rated the skill and rapidity with which Marmont could move, and his knowledge of the country. He was deceived also, as to the security of the ford at Alba; for on this as on many previous occasions in the war, the Spaniards had disappointed him, and the officer in charge of the fort had evacuated it without informing him. Marmont was aware of this, and knew that at this point, if not at Huerta, he would find a passage.

Movements  
on 20th.

After remaining throughout the day of the 19th facing Wellington, he concentrated his troops in the evening towards his own left. Then on the morning of the 20th, marching up the right bank of the Guarena, he crossed the river unopposed, and moved with all possible speed in a direction across Wellington's right flank, and towards the fords of Huerta and Alba on the Tormes. Wellington, as soon as he discovered this march, and saw that Marmont's design was to turn his right flank, made a corresponding movement up the left bank of the Guarena, and endeavoured, in the first instance, to cross the French line of march at Cantalpino, and frustrate their object. In this he failed, for on approaching this place, it was evident that Marmont had outmarched and outflanked him; and so now turning and moving in a direction parallel to the French columns, he made for some high ground north of the ford of Aldea Lengua.

The whole country between the Trabancas and the Tormes is undulating and open ; and during some of the manœuvres of the 20th, the hostile armies had marched for a long time upon parallel hilly ridges, within half musket range of each other, yet without coming to battle. Each army was straining every nerve to outstrip its enemy, and there was no time for more than an occasional cannon shot upon either side ; but yet the ranks had to be kept closed up, ready to form at once in order of battle, for both generals watched keenly for any error which would warrant an attack. In this way the two armies both pressed towards the Tormes, the officers, Napier tells us, exchanging salutes, and waving their caps at one another, and the cavalry moving about seeking an opening for a charge.\*

Nature of the country between the Trabancas and Tormes.

Peculiar character of these movements.

By nightfall on the 20th, Marmont's leading column had reached Huerta, and secured the ford ; and Wellington was upon some high ground close to Cabeza Velosa, with a division pushed on towards Aldea Lengua.

Position on the night of 20th.

On the 21st Marmont crossed the Tormes, by the fords of Huerta and Alba (placing a French garrison in the fort at Alba), and Wellington also passed the river by the fords of Santa Marta and Aldea Lengua. The French that evening encamped about Calvariza-Ariba, with their left extended towards and threatening the Ciudad-Rodrigo road. The Allies had their right at the village of Arapiles, their left at Santa

Movements on 21st.

Position on the night of the 21st.

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\* These movements conducted within view of the enemy, and though without any real fighting, still with the exchange of occasional cannon shots, might perhaps be fairly termed tactical movements, though they were in reality more "strategical" in their character. (See definition of Strategy and Tactics in the Introduction.)



Marta, and a division intrenched on the right of the Tormes (opposite Santa Marta) to guard against any advance of Marmont down that side of the river.

During this night, intelligence reached Wellington of the near approach of large cavalry reinforcements from the army of the North to strengthen Marmont, and also of Joseph being certainly on the march from Madrid. He now saw, that on account of the numbers of the enemy that were closing in upon him, he could hardly hope, in this campaign, to effect more than he had already accomplished, towards the great object of his efforts, viz.: the freedom of the Peninsula.

Wellington  
determines  
to retreat.

His mind was therefore made up to fall back once again upon Portugal; and on the 22nd he would have done so; but on that day Marmont (who had intercepted one of his letters, intimating an intention to retire) made a further effort to interpose between him and his line of retreat by turning his right in the direction of the Ciudad-Rodrigo road.

False move-  
ment of  
Marmont  
on 22nd.

Confidence and the sense of having outstripped his enemy in the late manoeuvres, may perhaps on this day have rendered the French leader careless, for, in his eagerness to seize the Ciudad-Rodrigo road, he pushed forward his left wing in such a manner that he separated it by some distance from his centre, and Wellington, perceiving the fault, immediately fell upon him. All Marmont's successful strategy was in a moment thrown away by the commission of this one error, for a victory for the Allies more complete than any of the previous ones of the war was the result of the battle which now ensued called the battle of *Salamanca*. In forty minutes the French

Battle of  
*Salamanca*,  
22nd July.



left wing, being unsupported by the centre, was almost annihilated; and had not the ford at Alba, across which the French retreated, been evacuated by the Spanish garrison, their entire army must have been destroyed. Marmont was wounded in this battle, and General Clausel now conducted the retreat of the routed army through Alba and Valladolid upon Burgos. French retreat to Valladolid and Burgos.

We can pass briefly over the remaining operations of this campaign. As the defeated French army, under Clausel, joined shortly by the cavalry reinforcements from the army of the North, fell back, Wellington followed, reaching Valladolid on the 30th. Here he captured several pieces of artillery and a quantity of stores, but from this point turned back and marched against Joseph, who, two days after the battle (*i.e.*, on the 24th) had arrived at Blasco Sancho from Madrid on his way with the army of the Centre to join Marmont. Joseph retired in haste before Wellington to Madrid, and subsequently (abandoning the capital) fell back southwards through Toledo, and Wellington entered Madrid in triumph, the small garrison left in that city surrendering at discretion. Wellington reaches Valladolid. Marches against Joseph. Enters Madrid in triumph.

Soult now raised the siege of Cadiz (August 26th), destroying his intrenchments and 500 cannon, and Soult evacuates Andalusia. *evacuated Andalusia*, moving to the aid of Joseph; and Hill, thus freed from his watch over Badajoz and the Alemtejo, marched eastwards and took up a position covering Madrid on the south.

Thus, during this year, Wellington had already surprised and taken two important fortresses from the Results of this campaign.

very midst, as it were, of the surrounding hosts of the French ; had routed one large army in a brilliant and decisive battle ; had liberated Cadiz and the whole province of Andalusia ; and had entered Madrid in triumph, driving Joseph before him.

Wellington leaves Madrid.

Had he now had more men, money and supplies, he would probably have retained permanently his triumphant position, but as it was, the French armies, beginning to close upon him once more, from the north and south he was obliged to move from Madrid, and, on the 1st September, marched again towards Valladolid, against the army of the North, which was now once more (under Clausel) rapidly assembling on the Duero. Clausel retired before him ; and Wellington, pushing on, laid siege to the Castle of Burgos, the capture of which he looked upon as very important.

Siege of Burgos.

Failure of the siege.

This siege was not successful. The defences of the castle were strong, the matériel at the disposal of Wellington for its reduction very limited, and the resistance made by the French desperate. From all these causes combined, five distinct assaults failed ; and at length, after a perseverance of thirty days, as Soult, Joseph, and the army of the North, were collecting and advancing upon him, Wellington was forced to raise the siege, and commenced on the 21st October, what is known as his *Retreat from Burgos*, and closely pressed by the French, retired over the Carrion near Palencia, and afterwards across the Duero towards Salamanca, blowing up the bridges. Hill (who upon Joseph's last advance had retreated through Madrid towards Arevalo) joined him close to Salamanca, and on the 18th November, the Allies

Retreat from Burgos.

reached Ciudad-Rodrigo, and shortly afterwards went into cantonments about the Coa and Agueda; the French, again, widely separating their armies to obtain supplies.

Conclusion  
of the  
campaign.

In this retreat from Burgos, the Allies lost about 7,000 men, but no guns or stores; and though, at the end of the year, Wellington found himself once more in Portugal, and the French still in Spain, a great deal had been achieved. Andalusia was freed; the power of falling with success upon the disjointed and scattered armies of the French had been proved; Joseph had been compelled to fly from Madrid, and a great moral prestige had been gained for the Allied arms. In speaking of the campaign as a whole, Napier remarks that "whatever failures there were, "it would probably (not excepting that of Waterloo) "be always considered as Wellington's finest illustration of the art of war." The next year saw Wellington advance finally, *not to retire again*, but to pursue the armies of the French across the Pyrenees into France.

#### REMARKS.

The strategical operations between Marmont and Wellington, which commenced on the 15th July, afford illustrations.

Illustrations of  
strategy  
afforded by  
Marmont's  
operations.

1st. Of one general attempting by strategy to gain an advantage over another by seizing upon his line of communication—in other words his line of supplies—while the other manœuvres to defend it.

2nd. Of one general, by means of strategy, forcing another to form for battle in a position which is disadvantageous to him.

Chief objects of Marmont and Wellington.

It should be observed, that during the manœuvres Marmont's line of communication lay through Valladolid towards Burgos, Wellington's along the road to Ciudad-Rodrigo. The object of Marmont was throughout to cut off Wellington's retreat to Ciudad-Rodrigo. The object of Wellington was to frustrate his design, but at the same time, if possible, to protect Salamanca; which, if he lost, he would have to retake before assuming the offensive again in Spain.

On 19th neither army had gained an advantage.

When on the 19th, after the movements of the three previous days, the two armies faced each other along the river Guarena, both armies covered their lines of supply, and Marmont had failed in his design.

On 20th the advantage lay with the French.

On the 20th, however, when Marmont, by his rapid movement round Wellington's right, had succeeded in turning it,—had frustrated Wellington's attempt to intercept him at Cantalpino; and had with his left reached Huerta, while Wellington was at Cabeza Velosa, it was evident that the French marshal had by his quick and skilful marching outmanœuvred the English general. "Wellington (says Napier) was deeply disquieted at the *unexpected result of this day's operations, which had been entirely to the advantage of the French*. Marmont had shown "himself perfectly acquainted with the country, he "had out-flanked and out-marched the Allies, and "gained the command of the Tormes."

It could then be seen, that if, on the following day, Marmont continued his rapid march, he might reach a lower point than Wellington upon the Ciudad-Rodrigo road, and interpose on the latter's communications.

From having gained the position he held, Marmont possessed great advantages over his adversary. Nature of  
this ad-  
vantage

1st. If Wellington retreated towards Ciudad-Rodrigo, he (Marmont) would regain Salamanca, in addition to having the chance of being able to attack him favourably while on the march.

2nd. If Wellington remained covering Salamanca he was liable to be brought to battle in a position not completely covering his line of supplies, but in one nearly parallel to it (for instance, facing S.E.), and even—to take the worst case—in one facing S., after his retreat along the Ciudad-Rodrigo road had been intercepted by his adversary. It is evident that either of these positions is a disadvantageous one for an army to fight in, because, if defeated and forced back, it is almost certainly *driven off* its line of supplies, and away from the depôts where it can procure fresh stores and food.

An army, on the other hand, which fights in a position completely covering its line of supplies; (*i. e.*, in one from which this line leads away directly to the rear,) is less likely, if defeated, to be dispersed and ruined by its defeat, as it will most probably be able to retire along its line of supplies, reorganise again, and once more take the field.

Marmont, therefore, had so manœuvred his army that when it was about to come into collision with the enemy, it had gained a position of great advantage.

This is *one of the chief objects* of strategy, and up to the time that Marmont (on the 22nd) made his false movement before Wellington, the former held the advantage.



Not sufficient to simply gain an advantage, but necessary to hold it in battle.

But "Strategy" is subordinate to "Tactics" in this way, that it is of no use obtaining an advantage before a battle, provided that *in* the battle it cannot be held. In the present instance it was completely thrown away.

Wellington in his despatches tells us, that if Marmont had not given him a favourable chance of attacking him on the 22nd, he had intended to "move towards Ciudad-Rodrigo without further loss of time," (*i.e.* to give up Salamanca). But on the 22nd, Marmont, in his eagerness to secure the Ciudad-Rodrigo road, did give this favourable chance, by separating his left wing too much from his right.

That fault had to be seized in about twenty minutes or the opportunity would have past; and in at once seizing it the military talent and decision of Wellington are very conspicuous. Directly the error was made, he fell upon his enemy and gave him no chance of retrieving it. All Marmont's previous advantages were then wrested from him, and from a position nearly akin to discomfiture, Wellington sprung to one of the most brilliant and complete victory.

Thus it is not sufficient to merely *obtain* an advantage in strategy; but when obtained, it must be held in spite of the enemy.

Marmont's movements, though uncovering his line of supply, were not dangerous to him.

It would be remarked by anybody considering these movements attentively, that Marmont, in pushing forward with the left of his army towards the Ciudad Rodrigo road, was clearly laying open his own line of supplies and retreat through Valladolid. This, under the actual circumstances of the case, he was able to do with impunity. 1st. Because Wellington, if he



moved to cut him off from this line, would have to abandon himself the road through Ciudad-Rodrigo, which he was very unlikely to do. 2nd. If he did attempt this, Marmont could still fall back upon Joseph, who was advancing from Madrid towards Blasco Sancho. He would therefore merely abandon one line of supplies to fall back upon another, and so was in no danger of suffering any disaster.

The reasons for the siege of the Castle of Burgos should be understood.

Reasons for  
laying siege  
to Burgos.

This castle was of importance, because it guarded the French line of communication through Bayonne. Moreover, its capture would be a step towards establishing a line of communication with the north coast of Spain, and now that the French armies were becoming weaker, and the Allies stronger; and it was unlikely (in consequence of the Russian war) that Napoleon would be able to send reinforcements into the Peninsula, it might be possible to strike at the French from the north, and endeavour to interpose between their armies and France. This was impossible at the opening of the war, on account of the enormous superiority in numbers possessed by the French.

With regard to the extended positions which the circumstances of the French regarding supplies obliged them to take up; and with reference also to the French system of obtaining supplies, it may be mentioned that it was a maxim of Napoleon's that "war should support war," i.e. that the supply of an army should be maintained, as far as possible, by exactions

Systems of  
French and  
English  
armies of  
obtaining  
supplies  
in war.

from the inhabitants of the hostile country in which the troops were operating.

Contributions were levied upon the occupied districts with a merciless severity, and no payment was given in return.

Such is still, in a great measure, the system of the French; but it is not, and never has been, in modern times, that of the English, with whom it is a principle to pay the inhabitants for every article which they supply.

The English system is one founded both upon justice and policy; for it is unjust to make the inhabitants—especially the peasantry—of a country suffer for war, entered into (as it almost invariably is) by the government, and without the smallest reference to them; and it is impolitic (in the long run) to render the people hostile, and averse to afford assistance; and to drive them by harsh treatment to desert their homes, and leave the soil uncultivated.

Their comparative merits.

The French system is the most economical, and though harsh and high-handed, it may answer in a *short* war, but in a long one, such as that in the Peninsula the English must clearly prevail.

Advantages the French enjoyed in the Peninsula by following their system.

The French, by following this method of supporting their army, gained one or two advantages, more especially after Napoleon, by stopping their supplies from France, had left them entirely dependent on their own exertions for the necessaries of life. In the first place, they became wonderfully expert in collecting food and forage; the soldiers, we are told, "were trained to reap the standing corn, and grind it by portable mills into flour; if green, they mowed it down with equal dexterity for their horses; if reaped"

(and hidden away by the inhabitants), "they forced it from the peasants' place of concealment by placing the bayonet to their throats."—ALISON.

In the next, as a result of the above experience and training, they became *comparatively independent of their lines of supply*, and during periods of the Peninsula war were cut off from all supplies, and yet managed to exist as armies. With regard to this,

Wellington, on the 21st July, 1812, writes thus:—

Letter of  
Wellington  
on this  
point.

"The French armies in Spain have never had  
"any *secure* communication beyond the ground  
"which they occupy; and provided the enemy  
"opposed to them is not too strong for them, they  
"are indifferent in respect to the quarter from which  
"their operations are directed, or upon which side  
"they carry them on."

It has been said, because the French armies did thus exist for some time in the Peninsula without a safe line of supply, that it is not so essential as is usually laid down, to have and protect such a line; and as this campaign turned in a great measure upon the question of supplies, we allude more particularly to the matter.

Argument  
held with  
regard to  
this.

The above letter of Wellington shows, it is true, that the French had gained a certain independence with regard to their line of supply, but the following extracts from others of his letters point out at what a price they purchased it. Writing to Lord Liverpool, 14th December, 1811, he says:—

Price they  
paid for  
these ad-  
vantages.

"The French begin to find that they *cannot keep*  
"their large armies together for any operation which

Letters as  
to this.

"will take time, and that when we can reach them they can do nothing with small bodies."

Again, he says:—

"They (*i.e.* the French) live by the authorised and regulated plunder of the country, if any should remain; they suffer labour, hardships, and privations every day; they go on, without pay, provisions, money, or anything, but they *lose in consequence half their army in every campaign.*"

Opinions  
of French  
generals as  
to the  
French  
position in  
the Penin-  
sula.

The opinions of some of the French generals themselves regarding the position of their armies is instructive:—

"Bessières to Berthier, 6th June, 1811.

"All the world is aware of the vicious system of our operations, every one sees that we are too much scattered; we should concentrate our forces, and retain certain 'points d'appui,' (*i.e.* points of support), which would afford support for magazines and hospitals——."

"Marmont to Berthier, 26th February, 1812.

"I arrived at the head quarters of the North in January last; I did not find a grain of corn in the magazine; nothing anywhere but debts; and a real or fictitious scarcity, the natural result of *the absurd system of administration which has been adopted.* Provisions for each day's consumption could only be obtained with arms in our hands. *There is a wide difference between that state and the possession of magazines which can enable an army to move.* On the other hand, the English army is always united and disposable, because it is supplied with money and the means of transport."

"Marmont to Berthier, 2nd March, 1812.

[Referring to the remarks of the Emperor that the English "would be mad" to march on Badajoz while he (Marmont) was at Salamanca.]

"The Emperor appears to attach great weight to the effect which my demonstrations in the north will produce on the mind of Lord Wellington. I venture to entertain a contrary opinion, as I know that general is well aware that we have *no magazines*, and appreciates the immense difficulties which the country presents from the impossibility of getting subsistence. Lord Wellington knows perfectly that the *Army of Portugal at this season is incapable of acting*, and that if it advanced beyond the frontier it would be forced to return after a few days, having *lost all its horses*. The Emperor has ordered great works at Salamanca; he appears to forget that we have neither provisions to feed the workmen nor money to pay them, and that we are, in every sense, on the verge of starvation."

It can be seen then, that the French, though they managed to remain in the country, did so only at the cost of great privations and losses; and of having to endanger their existence by scattering; and the history of their armies in the Peninsula illustrates that the loss of 'communications' occasions difficulty as to supplies, and that from this difficulty follows dispersion and danger. Owing to exceptional circumstances (viz.: the weakness of the Spaniards, and the numerical inferiority of the allied army) their destruction was for a long time deferred; but it was only deferred, and when the allied army became comparatively strong, the scattered French armies

French supply system in the Peninsula therefore bad, and led to their ruin in the end.



were unable to cope with it. No army can, in fact, disperse itself as with impunity in the presence of a *powerful and organized* enemy, and hence it is that at all times, in *European* warfare, supplies must be kept up, and the lines which form the thoroughfares of supply be jealously guarded. This is especially the case in the present day, because the enormous numbers in which European armies enter the field in war, make it proportionately more difficult to supply them. Of course in war with eastern nations (such as the inhabitants of India), of inferior military knowledge, or with savage ones, the rule may be relaxed, and it is the proof of an able leader to know where and when to do so—in order to avoid such dispersion.

German  
system of  
supply.

Before closing these remarks upon the supply of armies, it may be said that the German arrangements in the late war of 1870 with France for obtaining supplies—as the writer saw it in operation—is a combination of the system of keeping up a stream of supplies from the base, and exacting contributions from the occupied districts, and without payment. The lines of communication with Germany were most jealously guarded, and if they had been cut the large German armies could not have long maintained themselves; but, in addition to this, the occupied territory was laid under heavy contributions, collected (without payment), and with unsparing severity, but always by authority, and at a fixed scale, and only for food (sometimes including wine), tobacco, and transport. Everything beyond what was thus laid down was paid for by the German soldier, in cash; and any private theft was severely dealt with. Such a



system may perhaps be argued to be not unjust, on the ground that it is more fair that the people of a country, whose government has chosen without reason to declare war on another, should suffer, than that the inhabitants of the country forced to go to war should be taxed to pay for supporting the army; but it is at best a system harsh and ungenerous, and falls very heavily upon those classes of a nation who must least be responsible for a war—viz., the small farmers and peasantry, and their wives and children.

## LECTURE X.

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### CAMPAIGN OF VITORIA, 1813.

This campaign a  
strategical  
one.

THIS campaign was eminently "strategical" in its character and may be said to have been in reality the crowning one of the war.

Situation of  
affairs at its  
opening.

It had been felt by England, after the operations of 1812, that the moment had arrived when a great effort made for the complete expulsion of the French from Spain would meet with success; and so during the time that the army remained in cantonments [*i. e.* throughout the winter of 1812-13], preparations on an earnest and liberal scale were made for enabling the allied army to assume the offensive in the most efficient possible condition, in the ensuing spring. Fresh Portuguese battalions were raised; reinforcements of every description sent from England; and the departments of the army so organised that they were in all respects completely ready for active service in the field. The Spaniards also began to collect together and form into armies, and the guerillas became very active throughout the country. While

the Allies were thus in May, 1813, more perfect as an army than they had ever been before, and had also that moral strength which a now thoroughly well justified confidence in themselves, and faith in their leader, necessarily gave to them, the French felt that the scale of the war was turning against them. Obligated continually to scatter over the country to obtain subsistence, and forced to be constantly on the alert against the guerilla bands, they were losing heart and becoming more or less discouraged. Napoleon also had been worsted in his campaign against Russia, and had withdrawn many of his troops from the Peninsula. The French leaders in Spain saw that they could expect no reinforcements from France, and, to add to their difficulties, they were now suffering under a disheartening sense of constant defeats in the field, and of an entire want of confidence in their leader, Joseph.

When the campaign opened, the position and strength of the Allies and French may, sufficiently Position of the Allies. for our purpose, be set down as follows:—

The Anglo-Portuguese army, about 75,000 strong, of whom 44,000 were British, were in cantonments about the Coa; the right under Hill extended towards the pass of Baños, and the left near Lamego.

A large Spanish force including some irregular mountain bands under Castaños, about 40,000,—principally in Galicia, and the Asturias.

Wellington had been appointed generalissimo of all the Spanish forces, and held independent command of the whole allied army.

The French were distributed thus:—

Of the  
French.

About 60,000 under the command of Joseph, were in Castille, Leon, and the central provinces.

Their left stretched in a disjointed manner from Toledo and Madrid across behind the Tormes and beyond Salamanca; their centre maintained the line of the Duero, having raised defensive works along that river, and the right was behind the river Esla.

The forces detailed above were those which were to bear the brunt of the approaching campaign. Other armies, both of French and Allies occupied the provinces of Biscay, Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, &c., and French troops, as usual, held the line of communication through Burgos to Bayonne. At the opening of this campaign, the Allies throughout the Peninsula (for the first time in the war) pretty nearly balanced the French as regards strength, but were more concentrated and in better order than the enemy; and those troops more immediately to be engaged under Wellington and Joseph were nearly equal in numbers.

Main ob-  
ject of the  
French.

The French, under Joseph, had Valladolid given to them as the point of concentration, if attacked; and their main object was to hold and defend to the last the line of the Duero, expecting that Wellington, if he advanced, would move, as in the previous campaign, upon Salamanca, and thence on that river.

Description  
of the  
country  
about the  
Sabor and  
Tua.

Now the country about the rivers Sabor and Tua, which lies *within* the frontier of Portugal, and approaches the right bank of the Duero, was known to be most rugged and difficult of passage, and any movement of the Allies through it was not anticipated

as either probable or possible by the French, who were ignorant that Wellington had so far improved the navigation of the Duero, as to be able to bring boats with quickness up to where his left rested on that river, and thus be able to cross it, without any difficulty or delay sufficient to give them warning.

Wellington, having carefully examined this country, was of opinion that by great exertions he could get his artillery and supplies over it. He knew also that he would not be expected in this quarter, and so he determined to endeavour to advance through it, join with the Spanish Army in Galicia, and then take in rear the French line of defence upon the Duero, the strength of which in front was very formidable.

To carry out this plan of campaign, the allied army moved forward about the middle of May, in three distinct portions.

The left, 40,000, under Graham (forming the main force), was entrusted with the effort to turn the French line upon the Duero, and crossing that river between Lamego and the Spanish frontier advanced northwards through Braganza and other points, performing successfully a most laborious march; formed a junction with the Galicians, and then, turning eastwards, pushed towards Zamora and the line of the Esla.

When Graham was sufficiently forward upon his march, Wellington, commanding the centre in person, advanced upon the direct road to Salamanca; and Hill, with the right, crossing the Tormes lower down that river, also marched towards Salamanca.

This plan of Lord Wellington's completely deceived Success



of Wel-  
lington.

French  
retire be-  
hind the  
Duero.

Are sur-  
prised and  
abandon  
their  
position.

Allied  
columns  
unite.

Thus the  
line of the  
Duero is  
turned.

Allies  
move  
forward.

Joseph  
retires  
behind the  
Ebro.

the French. Joseph and the French leaders, never suspecting that the main body of the Allies was moving against their right, and imagining that Wellington and Hill were coming upon them in force from the south, fell back, after a feeble resistance, to their defensive line behind the Duero.

Graham's troops now began to arrive upon the right bank of the Esla; forced the passage over it; and by their unexpected appearance struck dismay into the French, who, afraid of being surrounded and enclosed, retired precipitately, destroying the bridges over the Duero, and abandoning all their works.

On the 3rd of June, the whole of the allied columns united at Toro; Joseph, being in the meantime engaged in collecting his scattered army, (which, upon Wellington's advance, had begun to concentrate from all quarters) behind the river Pisuerga, from Valladolid northwards.

Thus the first step in this campaign had been successfully accomplished by the Allies, and the *strong French line upon the Duero was turned.*

The Allies, who now,—by the junction of the Galicians,—were raised to a total of 90,000 men, advanced across the Carrion to the Pisuerga, and Joseph, who was bent upon rallying his forces and giving battle close to Burgos, still retired. He did not, however, in the end make his intended stand at this point, but, upon receiving an unfavourable report from the Chief of his Staff of the condition of the works at Burgos, and having been unable as yet to bring up into line his troops in Biscay and Aragon, fell back still further, and *concentrated behind the line*



of the Ebro. Some of his troops remained near Burgos, but upon the left of the Allies being pushed forward across the upper Pisuerga, threatening to cut them off from Miranda, and a direct advance being also made upon the town, they *blew up the castle and withdrew*. And blows up the Castle of Burgos.

The position which Joseph had now taken up behind the Ebro was by nature a very strong one. The Strength of Joseph's position. The river itself formed a good line of defence, and the road leading to it from Burgos passed through narrow mountain gorges; and one of these, especially—viz., the defile of Pancorbo—which was defended by a small castle, was so narrow, that a mere handful of men could have held it against a large force, and it was occupied by some of Joseph's troops.

For these reasons, to have attacked Joseph's position in front would have entailed great loss upon the Allies, and the result must have been very doubtful. Wellington determines to turn it.

Wellington, therefore, again determined to *turn* the position if possible, and, with a view to this movement, made a careful reconnoissance of the country N.W. of Miranda, and towards the upper Ebro. This district was very mountainous and rocky, and it was supposed that no road existed across it practicable for carriages; but, as in the case of his former resolve with regard to the N.E. corner of Portugal, Wellington determined to attempt the passage of it, especially as the difficulty of the operation was likely to prevent its being suspected, and moreover, the results, if it succeeded, would probably be of vast importance to the Allies.

The allied army now moved northward towards the March of

the Allies  
to effect  
this.

upper Ebro, with the object of crossing that river near its source about Rocamunde and Puente Arenas and so coming down along its right bank upon the position of the French, near Vitoria.

The details of this arduous march cannot be given in this short account; great and constant difficulties had to be overcome, but they were met and conquered successfully.

Difficulty of  
the march.

"Neither (says Napier) the winter gullies, nor the ravines, nor the precipitate passes amongst the rocks retarded even the march of the artillery—where horses could not draw men hauled; when the wheels would not roll the guns were let down or lifted up with ropes—six days they toiled unceasingly, and on the seventh" (*i.e.*, 20th June) "they burst like raging streams from every defile, and went foaming into the basin of Vitoria."

Position  
taken up by  
Joseph.

On the above date (June 20th), the Allies had moved down the right bank of the Ebro, and were close upon Joseph. The latter had collected his army to meet them along the little river Zadorra, covering the town of Vitoria, and [forced as he was to face his foes coming from the N.W.] his line of battle ran parallel to his line of retreat along the great Bayonne road. Wellington could now attack Joseph to great advantage; and moreover, as by the direction of his line of march he had interposed his army between St. Ander (on the northern coast) and the main French body, this port as well as others had been evacuated by the French. English vessels entered it, and thus a free communication with the sea upon the north coast was secured.

Its defects.

Advantage  
already  
gained by  
Wellington.

Advancing against Joseph on the 21st, Wellington attacked him in his position; the main object sought for in the battle being to force the enemy's right, and *cut him off from the Bayonne road*. In the battle of Vitoria (21st June) which now took place, the Allies were slightly superior to the enemy in numbers (about 80,000 to 60,000); Joseph had chosen his position badly, and fought without skill; and his overthrow was complete and final. "Never," says Napier, "was an army more hardly used by its commander, and never was a victory more complete."

Wellington  
attacks  
Joseph.

Victory of  
Vitoria.

The French (according to Gazan, a French general) "lost all their equipages—all their guns—all their treasure—all their papers, so that no man could prove even how much pay was due to him; generals and subordinate officers alike were reduced to the clothes on their backs, and most of them were barefooted."

For this great victory, illuminations and public rejoicings were general in every town and village throughout England, Wellington was promoted to the rank of Field Marshal by England, and created Duke of Vitoria by Spain.

There was only one respect in which this battle might have been more thoroughly overwhelming; and this was that the bulk of the French army, though cut off from the road to Bayonne, managed still to escape—but in great disorder, and without one single gun or any description of baggage—by the road to Pampeluna, and thence to the mountains of the Pyrenees.

One respect  
in which it  
might have  
been more  
complete.

The war in the Peninsula was, by the battle of Madrid Vitoria, virtually concluded in favour of the Allies, now evacuated.

though some serious battles had yet to be fought before the termination of the war. Madrid was evacuated by the French; and their hold on Spain reduced to the strongholds of San Sebastian and Pampeluna, and some posts in Catalonia and Valencia.

Operations  
after the  
battle of  
Vitoria.

We have mentioned that, before the battle of Vitoria, Joseph was endeavouring to collect his troops from every direction in order to meet Wellington, and after the battle some of these, followed by the British, narrowly escaped from being cut off from France. Graham was directed against General Foy, who with a force of French was coming from Bilbao, and who, after making a short stand at Tolosa, retired over the Pyrenees, to Irun on the Bidassoa, throwing some men into St. Sebastian to strengthen the garrison on his way. Three British divisions were also marched towards Tudela to try and intercept a French force under Clausel, which had approached Vitoria from Logrono. Clausel managed, however, to escape from these, and falling back through Saragossa, and sacrificing his artillery, crossed the Pyrenees into France. The main body of the French under Joseph retreated by Pampeluna in great disorder, reaching it on the 24th, and after leaving a garrison and some provisions in the fortress, retired, hard pressed by the Allies, over the Pyrenees to the river Bidassoa.

The Allies now occupied all the principal passes opposite the French in the Pyrenean chain. The entire garrison left behind in the castle of Pancorbo defending the narrow defile between Vitoria and Burgos, surrendered to a Spanish bombardment.

Valencia and several ports in old Castile and Aragon were evacuated, and the French now only held a footing in some of the fortresses and fortified towns, principally in Catalonia (which province was occupied by a corps under Suchet), and were, practically speaking, expelled from the Spanish soil.

The grand object of the Peninsula war was thus almost accomplished—but it was not yet thoroughly so; and it became necessary to secure the fruits of the victories already obtained, by crushing the power of Napoleon. To this end it was resolved to carry the war into *France*, in order to aid the allied sovereigns in the contest they were waging with the French Emperor in Germany.

Resolution  
to carry the  
war into  
France.

Before Wellington could venture to do this it was essential to reduce the two fortresses of St. Sebastian and Pampeluna. The former of these was accordingly besieged, and the latter blockaded, while the passes of the Pyrenees were held against the French, the army extending from the Bidassoa in front of St. Sebastian on the left, to the pass of Ronscevalles on the right. St. Sebastian was assaulted by the Allies on the 25th July without success, and on the same day the French commenced a series of operations with a view of relieving the fortresses. Marshal Soult, sent by the Emperor after the battle of Vitoria to supersede Joseph in command of the army, had arrived in the middle of July, and having collected his troops, now about 80,000 strong, at the foot of the mountains about St. Jean Pied de Port, declared his intention of driving back Wellington beyond the Ebro. His first movements were directed towards the relief of Pampeluna, and opened with an attempt

St. Sebastian and  
Pampeluna  
besieged  
and  
blockaded.

Operations  
of Soult  
in the Py-  
renees to  
relieve the  
fortresses.



to force the Allied right at the passes of Ronscevalles and Maya, from which roads converge on Pampeluna. It was his design after having driven in the allied right and relieved Pampeluna, to move towards St. Sebastian, rolling back by numbers the various corps which Wellington had posted between these two fortresses, and finally relieving St. Sebastian.

The French had this advantage at the commencement of their operations, that Wellington himself was at the time at the extreme left of his line near St. Sebastian. Soult's attack was made with great skill, and the Allied troops holding the passes on the right were compelled, after hard fighting, to fall back, and were on 27th July retreating towards Pampeluna, when Wellington (who had heard on the night of the 25th of the advance of Soult, and immediately set off towards his right, urging on reinforcements as he passed) arrived; and took up a strong position on some heights, covering the junction of the two principal roads from Maya and Ronscevalles to Pampeluna, posting a force under Hill to guard against Soult turning the left by a detour. On the 27th and 28th Soult made very strenuous efforts to dislodge him, but failed; and seeing that it was in vain for him to hope to carry out his original plan of operations withdrew; but only to make a further attempt by a march towards his own right to force the passage of the mountains from a different direction. Here he also failed, and on the 31st July finally retired—the two armies taking up, on the 31st August, much the same positions occupied by them before the French advance.

Soult's operations, from the 25th to 31st July, comprise what are termed "*The Battles of the*



*Pyrenees*," and form a very interesting study, as illustrations of mountain warfare, though too intricate to enter into here.

On the approach of Soult, and the failure of the first assault, on the 25th July, the siege of St. Sebastian had been suspended and converted into a blockade; but as soon as the French efforts to relieve the fortresses had been defeated, it was renewed with vigour; and after a bloody assault the town and all the defences, except a castle standing on a very elevated rock, were stormed on the 31st August. Capture of St. Sebastian, except the castle.

On this very day Soult made another attempt by throwing bridges over the Bidassoa to advance and relieve the fortress, but he was driven back, and on the 9th September the castle of St. Sebastian itself capitulated. Further effort of Soult to relieve it.

Through the month of September Wellington was occupied in reorganising the Allied army—closing together all his available troops—and making the many arrangements necessary before he could set out with confidence upon his intended invasion of France.

As a preliminary step towards the greater operations in prospect, and pending the reduction of Pampluna (which, though closely blockaded, still held out), he resolved to give a strong position to the left of his army by passing the Bidassoa river (which forms the boundary between Spain and France), and seizing—by dislodging the enemy from it—some high ground on the right bank. On the 7th October the Allied troops, after some manœuvres to distract Soult, crossed the river at different points—some by Wellington's passage of the Bidassoa.

foraging at low water, others by a bridge at Vera (the only one left unbroken by the French)—and after a sharp struggle gained their object, driving the enemy from a strongly intrenched position above Vera, which was then occupied by the left of the Allied army, bridges being constructed over the Bidassoa in order to communicate with Spain. This *Passage of the Bidassoa* entailed comparatively little loss upon the Allies. The French army then fell back behind the river Nivelle, where Soult, in anticipation of a retreat, had already selected and fortified a strong position.

Soult re-  
tires behind  
the Nivelle.

Both armies now remained quiet for a month, Wellington waiting for the surrender of Pampeluna, and Soult strengthening himself on the Nivelle.

Pampeluna  
capitulates.

Termina-  
tion of the  
operations  
in Spain.

At length on the 31st October, Pampeluna capitulated, after having held out with great resolution, and all obstacles towards a forward movement were removed. Thus terminated the British operations in *Spain*; and Wellington—now concentrating his forces towards his left—advanced (10th November) against Soult, and commenced his campaign in the South of France.

The remaining operations of the year 1813, and those of the year 1814 we reserve for another lecture.

#### REMARKS.

Wellington's plan  
of campaign  
divided his  
army.

It should be noticed that Wellington's plan of operations at the opening of the campaign was open to the objection that it divided his army; and that, up to the time when the right and centre, advancing from the south upon the Duero, could join with the

left, detached to cross the Esla and turn the French Line; there could be little or no communication between the separated portions. Reasons  
for adopt-  
ing it.

The reason Wellington adopted this plan was :—

1st.—Because either portion of his army, if forced back, had a strong country upon which to retire, and the result of even a repulse was only likely to be a loss of time in opening the campaign.

2nd.—If he bore with his whole force from the south against the French line behind the Duero, he would not only have a very strong position to force, but would lose the advantage of joining with the Galicians before he attacked.

3rd.—If he endeavoured to turn the French position on the Duero, not by the North bank of the river but by the *South*, he would have to make a wide circuit over the upper Tormes, and thence skirt the mountains till he could cross the Duero near its source. He might, in effecting this movement, keep his whole army together; but, on the other hand, it must be made through an exhausted country which would necessitate his having a long line of supplies, and he would, as in the second case, lose the direct aid of the Galicians.

4th.—By operating as he did, he would, if successful, turn the position of the French, and then, as he moved forward, would at each step gain strength by the accession of the Spanish insurgents in the north, and be able to open a communication with the fleet and change his line of supplies from Portugal to a shorter one from the northern coast of Spain.

5th.—He could not operate with his whole army in the direction taken by his left, as his march would

at once disclose his intention, and also Joseph might bring him back by an advance into Portugal.

Result  
forms an  
example of  
success  
attending a  
double line  
of opera-  
tions.

He therefore decided that his best plan was to make his left [which was to be isolated, and perform the turning movements] as strong as possible, and then endeavour to draw the attention of Joseph southwards by the advance of his centre and right.

It was, in fact, the relative advantages which this plan offered over every other; the belief that it was feasible; the probability of its not being suspected; and the knowledge of the want of energy of Joseph that determined Wellington to hazard it.

• Every possible precaution, such as providing a pontoon train and guides for each separate column, was taken to secure the successful march of the bulk of the army forming the left, and many stratagems and ruses, which we need not detail, were resorted to, to make the enemy imagine that operations in other quarters were intended.

Turning  
the Ebro, a  
repetition  
of the turn-  
ing move-  
ment round  
the Duero.

The result affords one of what may be said to be the comparatively exceptional examples of success attending upon a double line of operations.

Strategical  
advantage  
gained  
by it.

The turning the line of the Ebro was but a repetition on perhaps a grander scale of that of the Duero, but the operation was far safer. The army was moving together; and even had the design failed in its complete success (*i.e.* of cutting off Joseph from Bayonne), Wellington would, at all events, have gained St. Ander and a new base of operations on the north coast.

It should be noticed that the French evacuation of St. Ander and the possession of the road from it to Burgos was one of the *most important strategical*

*advantages* gained for the Allies by the turning the Ebro.

"This single blow severed the long connexion of the English troops with Portugal, which was thus cast off by the army as a heavy tender is cast from its towing rope. All the British military establishments were broken up and transferred by sea to the Coast of Biscay."—NAPIER.

It may be asked what could Joseph have done to have prevented this advance of Wellington, by which he was deceived and beaten from first to last?

Plans which Joseph might have followed.

In answer to this, it may be said briefly, that time had been given him through the winter of 1812-13, to have made a greater effort than he did to carry out a plan which had been dictated to him by Napoleon—too long to give here, and which he did not follow—which aimed at the subjugation of the insurgents in the North, and after that at the occupation of Wellington's army by threatening Portugal. That he might also have delayed the Allies at the rivers Carrion and Pisuerga, and finally, that when driven towards Vitoria, he might have arranged for a retreat, if defeated, upon Saragossa (instead of Bayonne), as he might there have joined with the French about Madrid and in the eastern provinces, and delayed the invasion of France.

This campaign may be considered as a marked instance of the advantage to be gained by successful strategy. In one month, by a long and skilful march, Wellington had turned two strong river lines; changed his base from Portugal to St. Ander, and thus gained a shorter and more favourable line of communication than he formerly possessed; and

This Campaign a marked instance of successful strategy.

Summary of its results.



brought his enemy to battle in a position where a defeat was likely to be (and was) ruin to him, and all this with but a nominal loss of men.

Reasons for  
the siege  
and invest-  
ment of St.  
Sebastian  
and Pam-  
peluna.

The reason why St. Sebastian was besieged and Pampeluna invested was because it would not have been safe for Wellington to advance into France with his line of communication liable to be interrupted by the garrisons of these fortresses.

The matériel necessary to conduct two *sieges* at once was not easily obtainable, and on this account, both could not be *besieged* at one time.—As it was of consequence to get possession of St. Sebastian as soon as possible, in order to secure a safe harbour for ships before the rough weather set in, and another port on the north coast at which to land supplies, this fortress was besieged, and Pampeluna invested only, as it was the less important place of the two. It was considered to be so badly provisioned, that it could not long hold out, and the Spanish and Portuguese troops were capable of undertaking the investment. The arrangements made and operations carried out to defend the passes of the Pyrenees and the roads leading over them, although too long and intricate to be detailed here, are very instructive, and ought to be read in Napier.

Remark as  
to Soult  
being driven  
from  
the line of  
the Bidas-  
son.

It has been contended that Soult never intended to make a serious stand behind the river Bidassoa, but meant to fall back directly he was attacked to his prepared position behind the Nivelles. The field works he had constructed, however, to defend the former position, seem to disprove this.



## LECTURE XI.

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### CAMPAIGNS IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

OPERATIONS UP TO END OF 1813, INCLUDING THE  
PASSAGES OF THE NIVELLE AND NIVE, AND  
ACTIONS BEFORE BAYONNE.

BEFORE sketching the operations of the campaign in the South of France, it is necessary to point out some of the topographical characteristics of the country, which was to become the theatre of it.

#### *Topography of the S.W. Frontier of France.*

One of the peculiar features of the south-west territory of France, especially of the more western portion of it, where the French and Allied armies were facing each other, is the existence of very many rivers. We shall now allude to some of these

Topography  
of S. W.  
frontier of  
France.

#### *Rivers.*

1st. *The Nivelle*; rising near Maya in the Pyrenees; a rapid but small river, entering the sea at a seaport called St. Jean de Luz. It was not fordable near its mouth, but was so near its source.

Principal  
rivers.

2nd. *The Adour*; rising about the centre of the Pyrenees; flowing in a semi-circular form by Tarbes, Aire, Dax and Bayonne; and entering the sea  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles after passing the latter town. Below Bayonne, it is about 300 yards broad. The mouth of this river (an important point to remember), is obstructed by a dangerous shifting sand-bank, which makes it a very difficult river to enter in rough weather. It is navigable as far as Dax; is subject to overflows in winter, but in very dry weather is fordable at several points.\*

*The Garonne*; rises about the centre of the Pyrenees, and is separated from the source of the Adour by the hills of Bigorre, and flows by St. Gaudens and Toulouse. Just below Toulouse, it turns to the N.W. and passing Grenade and Bordeaux, flows on, under the name of the Gironde, to the sea.

It varies greatly in width, which averages, however, about 200 yards. Near Bordeaux it is about 80 yards wide. Its navigation is difficult, and below Toulouse, it is in winter very subject to inundations.

The two last of the above rivers (viz., the Adour and Garonne) have several affluents, and these latter have also many small rivers flowing into them. We mention those only, the existence of which bore upon the campaign.

#### *Affluents of the Adour.*

Their Af-  
fluents.

On the left—  
Luy de France.

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\* The writer travelled along the Adour in January, 1869. At its mouth below Bayonne, on a calm still day, the water for some 500 yards out to sea, was covered with foam, the waves in places rising into green walls several feet in height. High up at Tarbes, the river was about 100 yards wide, and had an almost dry bed, as the season had been unusually dry.

Luy de Bearn.

The *Gave de Pau*; flowing by Pau and Orthez. Below Orthez it receives the *Gave d'Oleron* (which has before this point received the *Gave de Mauleon*) and enters the Adour below Peyrehorade, up to which it is navigable.

The *Bidouze* and *Joyeuse*; small streams entering between the junction of the Adour with the Pau, and Bayonne. Navigable for a few miles up from the Adour.

The *Nive*; Rising in the slopes of the Pyrenees, near St. Jean Pied de Port, and entering the Adour near Bayonne. Navigable for 12 miles from its mouth.

On the *right*—

These are unimportant.

#### *Affluents of the Garonne.*

On the *left*—

The *Save* rising not far from St. Gaudens and entering below Grenade.

The *Gimone*, the *Gers*, the *Losse*, all flowing in a direction somewhat parallel to the *Save*, &c., and entering below it.

On the *right*—

The *Salat* flowing by Girons.

The *Ariège* entering below Toulouse.

The *Ers* rising E. of Toulouse and entering below Grenade, near the junction of the *Save*.

In addition to the above rivers there are several rivulets of more or less size, which it is unnecessary to mention here, but which increase the network of streams intersecting the land.

The affluents both of the Adour and Garonne though in ordinary weather all fordable, were so only at certain points, and in the lower portions of their course were serious obstacles. In the winter they overflow their banks frequently. Just below Toulouse a canal cut from the Mediterranean enters the Adour. This canal is 32 feet wide and  $6\frac{1}{2}$  deep, and has many bridges over it, which, however, can be easily destroyed.

#### *Important Places.*

Important  
places.

*Bayonne* (on the Adour—close to its junction with the Nive) a strong fortress and with a citadel commanding the river Adour and its mouth.

*Bordeaux* on the Garonne.—One of the richest commercial towns in the S.W. of France, with an excellent harbour.

*Toulouse*.—A walled town, but not at all strong. It possesses a cannon foundry, an arsenal, military magazines, &c., and was one of the chief towns of the South of France.

St. Jean Pied de Port and Dax were fortified towns, but very weak ones. None of the towns in this district, except Bayonne, were, in fact, very strong.

#### *Roads.*

Roads.

These were cross country roads traversing the French districts N. of the Pyrenees, but these from the sticky clayey nature of the soil were very bad, and in winter almost impracticable for an army on account of the swampy character of the country caused by the overflowing of many rivers.

The principal high roads were—

- (1.) From Bayonne northward to Bordeaux, and also through Dax to Bordeaux.
- (2.) From Bayonne, along the right bank of Adour, to Port de Lanne; and thence following the right bank of the Gave de Pau to Peyrehorade, Orthez, Pau and Tarbes; and so by St. Gaudens and St. Girons to Perpignan. This was the great road connecting the eastern and western extremities of the Pyrenees on the French side.
- (3.) A little past St. Gaudens a road branched off from road (2), leading to Toulouse. From Orthez, Pau and Tarbes roads all led northwards towards the Bordeaux road, viz., from Orthez by St. Sever; from Pau by Aire; and from Tarbes by Maubourguet and Aire.

A fair road led from Bayonne to St. Jean Pied de Port at the foot of the Pyrenees.

#### REMARKS.

It can be inferred from the above description that the country comprised between the Adour and the Pyrenees was naturally one unfavourable for military operations. There was a good deal of cultivation in the central portion, irrigated by the many rivers, but the heavy nature of the soil, the bad roads, the liability of the streams to become torrents and to flood the surrounding ground, and the intersected character of the cultivated parts, were all obstacles to the movements of an army, and especially to those of Cavalry and Artillery, and to the transport of bridge apparatus, and siege equipage. North of Bayonne,

Remarks on  
the general  
character of  
the country.



between the Adour and Garonne, from the sea coast inwards for some 60 miles, great barren tracts of sand occur, varied only by marshes and heath. This is a peculiar feature of this part of the coast of France. The winds sweep up the sand in great waves, occasionally burying hamlets and villages; and as a consequence of this, the district (which is naturally unhealthy also) was but thinly inhabited, and traversed by scarcely any roads.

Further inland, the country between the Garonne and Adour is fertile, but much intersected and crossed by many streams.

The sea coast from the Spanish frontier up to the mouth of the Garonne is flat and dangerous. There are no ports of any consequence except those of St. Jean de Luz; Bayonne; (difficult, as we have pointed out, to enter) and Bordeaux. The above facts illustrate the difficulties Wellington was about to contend against, and the advantages for defence possessed by Soult.

Defensive  
lines of  
France  
north of the  
Pyrenees.

The Adour, with its several tributaries, is the first defensive line of France on the northern side of the Pyrenees; and, though few fortresses of any consequence existed to strengthen this, the natural obstacles of swollen streams, marshy ground, and bad roads, make it a line from which, except under exceedingly exceptional circumstances of dry weather, it would be very difficult to force an enemy.

Behind the Adour is the 2nd line of defence, viz., that of the Garonne and the Royal Canal, which latter extends from Toulouse to the Mediterranean Sea. To approach this line over the deserted sand



plains near the coast, between Bayonne and Bordeaux, would not be easy; and to do so at any point necessitated the passage of very many streams and a difficult country.

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## OPERATIONS OF THE CAMPAIGN.

(See Map V.)

Wellington advancing, as we said, on the 10th November, attacked Soult in his position on the Nivelle, which extended from the sea to beyond Ainhœ, and which he had rendered most formidably strong by the construction of several field works. The French right, being covered in front by the Nivelle here unfordable, and supported by the town of St. Jean de Luz, which was intrenched, Wellington's efforts were directed against their centre and left. After many hours' fighting, the French line was forced, and by nightfall the Allies were securely established on the right bank. The following morning they endeavoured to reach the road from St. Jean de Luz to Bayonne, hoping to cut Soult off from the latter place, but the French marshal had abandoned St. Jean de Luz in the night; and the roads being heavy from rain, and many of the bridges over the small streams broken, they were unable to attain their object, and Soult made good his retreat to Bayonne.

In this *passage of the Nivelle* 50 cannon and a quantity of stores were taken from Soult.

The Allies now went into cantonments, as unfavourable weather was approaching. Their line,

Passage of  
the Nivelle.

The Allies  
go into can-  
tonments.

which was strengthened by field works, extended from the sea behind Biarritz across to the river Nive in front of Arcangues, and thence along the left bank of that river to Cambo.

French concentrated round Bayonne.

The French concentrated, round Bayonne, where they had constructed a large intrenched camp (only about two miles from the allied front), placing posts along the right bank of the Nive.

Superior advantages of the French position.

In this position the French had access to the whole of the country between the right bank of the Nive and the Adour, the resources of which in food and forage they began actively to collect. They also had communication with St. Jean Pied de Port; and the uninterrupted navigation of the Adour between Dax and Bayonne. The Allies, on the other hand, found their position between the left bank of the Nive and the sea rather a cramped one; moreover, forage was scarce, and there was no good ground for the cavalry. Wellington therefore resolved to throw

Wellington determines to extend his right to the Adour.

forward that part of his line between Arcangues and Cambo, and extend it to the Adour, so as to give himself more room and a better field for supplies, and restrict the movements of the French. With this object he made demonstrations (on 9th December)

Passage of the Nive.

at two or three places, and crossing the Nive at points from Arcangues to Cambo, drove in the French posts. He then moved his right to the Adour, not far above Bayonne, and occupied a line extending round Bayonne in a sort of a semi-circle—viz., from the Adour, by St. Pierre and Villefranche, across the Nive (by a bridge of boats) to Arcangues, and so towards Biarritz. A brigade of cavalry and some Spaniards were also sent to Urcuray and Hasparren

to protect his rear and cut off Soult's communication with St. Jean Pied de Port.

This operation is termed the *passage of the Nive*.

Marshal Soult did not allow himself to be thus hemmed in without a struggle to redeem his ground. On the 10th December he attacked that portion of the allied line on the left bank of the Nive; and made a furious effort to defeat it, before the portion on the right bank could come to its aid, and this effort he renewed on the 11th. The Allies were greatly outmatched in these engagements; but they fought with a resolution which nothing could overcome, and on the 12th Soult, foiled in his attempts, retired to Bayonne, whence, on the 13th, he issued against that portion of the Allies on the right bank of the Nive,—hoping to find them weak in that quarter in consequence of having reinforced their left on the previous days,—but Wellington had anticipated such a move, and had already strengthened his right. Soult failed here also; and then, disheartened and weary, gave up all further attacks. In these affairs with Soult, called the *Actions before Bayonne*, the Allies lost over 3,000 killed and wounded; the French more. Soult immediately after this, took up the following defensive position. His right rested upon Bayonne, and thence his line, protected by redoubts armed with heavy artillery, followed the right of the Adour to its junction with the Bidouze, and then continued along the latter river to St. Palais, with advanced posts at St. Jean Pied de Port. This line he strengthened by every means in his power. Bridges were fortified at Port de Lanne, Hastings, Peyrehorade, and several points

Soult in the  
actions  
before  
Bayonne  
endeavours  
to redeem  
his ground.

He fails.

Assumes a  
new posi-  
tion.

Nature of  
this.

on the Bidouze; also at Navarreins on the Gave d'Oleron, &c. At Port de Lanne, a depôt was made and stores collected; and the town of Dax—through which lay the French line of communication, and which was also a depôt—was more strongly fortified.

Change of  
position  
made by  
Wellington.

Wellington made a corresponding change in his position. His troops were now extended up the Adour as far as Urt; the light cavalry were posted along the Joyeuse, and a division was placed at Urcuray. The French navigation of the Adour was interrupted as far as possible from the left bank, and their vessels prevented from passing except under fire or by stealth at night. The Allied supplies were now drawn from the sea principally from the Port of St. Jean de Luz.

Suspension  
of opera-  
tions.

The weather having now set in very wet and cold, and the ground being in an unfit state for active operations, the two armies, with the exception of some slight cavalry skirmishes, remained inactive until February, 1814. It may be mentioned that, during these operations in France, Wellington met with little opposition from the French people, many of whom were hostile to the Napoleon dynasty, and in favour of a restoration of the Bourbons; and who were well treated and paid for whatever supplies were taken.

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## OPERATIONS OF 1814,

INCLUDING THE PASSAGE OF THE ADOUR AND  
BATTLES OF ORTHEZ AND TOULOUSE.

Wellington  
recom-  
mences  
hostilities.

In the early part of February, the weather having improved, Wellington recommenced operations, with

a view of investing Bayonne; and obliging Soult, by forcing his left and advancing into France, to abandon his position on the Lower Adour. His army was now, nominally, a good deal superior in numbers to that opposed to him; for he had received reinforcements, while Napoleon had withdrawn troops from Soult: but, in the battles to which we are about to allude, the actual numbers contending on either side in the field were often nearly equal, and sometimes the Allies were even inferior in strength to the French. • On the 14th, Wellington drove in with his right, the French troops in the vicinity of St. Palais, and afterwards sending some Spaniards to blockade St. Jean Pied de Port, successively forced the enemy back across the rivers Bidouze and Gave de Mauleon, near their sources. Soult then retired to the right bank of the Pau, leaving (as Wellington desired) Bayonne to defend itself. These operations occupied some days; and during them the Allied centre conformed to the movement of the right by advancing to the Bidouze river, at the same time threatening a passage of the Adour near Urt; while the left remained near the centre, between the Nive and Adour, watching Bayonne. On the 22nd Soult was behind the line of the Gave de Pau, with his head-quarters at Orthez.

Object he  
had in view.

Forces the  
French  
back over  
the Bidouze  
and Gave de  
Mauleon.

Soult retires  
to Orthez.

Wellington now formed the design of throwing a bridge over the Adour and investing Bayonne, under the face of difficulties which surpassed in some respects those which he had overcome in his passage of the Duero in 1809. The nature of the mouth of the Adour has been already described. No open boat could venture to enter it; and the chances of finding a

Wellington  
determines  
to throw a  
bridge over  
the Adour.



passage over the bar in safety, even in decked boats, were apparently so slight, that by Soult the possibility of the Allies entering from the sea and bridging over the river below Bayonne had never been apprehended. If a bridge were thrown, however, it was necessary to throw it below the town, as the nature of the country above did not admit of the heavy matériel required for a bridge being transported over it.

To oppose a passage by the Allies the French had 10,000 troops in Bayonne, and a flotilla of gunboats on the river.

Succeeds in  
doing this.

The details of the manner in which the passage of the Adour were effected should be read in Napier. It is sufficient to say that by means of pontoons and rafts a certain number of men were got over on the 23rd and 24th of February, and managed to repulse the French who came out against them; that on the morning of the 25th a flotilla of decked boats that had been got ready beforehand and brought up from St. Jean de Luz, were got over the bar under the superintendence of Admiral Penrose, with the loss of six; and that, by noon of the 26th, a boat-bridge, available for all arms, was constructed over the river (here nearly 300 yards wide), the garrison driven into the town, and Bayonne invested by a portion of the allied left on both banks of the Adour, preparatory to its being besieged. In the meantime Wellington continued operations with his centre and right so as to drive back Soult from Orthez.

And also  
follows

On the 24th, the Spaniards by his orders shut in the French garrison at Navarreins, and a force under



Beresford that at Peyrehorade, while he himself, passing on with the right and centre of the allied army, crossed the Gave d'Oleron, above Navarreins, and on the 25th reached the Gave de Pau, with his left resting on the town of Orthez and his line running a little in front of, and nearly parallel to, the road to Dax. It was found a difficult matter to discover any fords over the Gave de Pau; and on approaching Orthez it was deemed impracticable to carry the bridge existing in front of the town by force, but at length (during the 25th and 26th) the bulk of the Allies found and got over some fords below Orthez, unopposed by the French—and on the morning of the 27th—attacked Soult. The efforts of Wellington were directed to force the right of the French, throwing it off from the road to Dax and Peyrehorade (other parts of their line being also attacked), while a force under Hill crossing at a ford discovered above Orthez, endeavoured to cut the enemy off from Pau, and threatened his rear and line of retreat to St. Sever. In order also to profit immediately by a victory, if gained, Wellington directed a bridge to be got ready, and thrown at Port Le Lanne if he were successful, so that his communication might be established uninterruptedly with Bayonne by the right bank of the Adour.

The battle of Orthez was a complete victory for the Allies. The right of the French was forced, and before they retired, Hill, who had cut them off from Pau, so nearly succeeded in coming upon their rear, that the retreat became a race between him and Soult for the passage of the Luy de Bearn, at Sault de Navailles, on the St. Sever road. The French just out-ran Hill's

Soult to  
Orthez.

Here Soult  
was drawn  
up and  
awaited  
him.

Attacks  
Soult.  
Aim of  
Wellington  
in the battle  
of Orthez.

Result of  
the battle.

division, both parties keeping at the double for more than three miles, and managed at last, though in considerable disorder, to reach the Adour at St. Sever on the 28th, where they halted to reorganize.

Beresford  
now sent to  
Bordeaux.  
Soult re-  
treats east-  
wards.

Beresford was now sent by Mont de Marsan to Bordeaux, but Soult wishing to draw off the Allies from that direction went off eastward marching up the right bank of the Adour, and on 3rd March collected his army at Plaisance and Maubourguet, with an advanced guard at Lembege, and Wellington followed. On the 2nd March there was an affair at Aire with the Allies in which the French were defeated. Beresford approached Bordeaux on the 12th March, and the popular voice there being strongly in favour of the overthrow of Napoleon and a restoration of the dynasty of the Bourbons, the garrison withdrew; and the authorities of the city welcomed the Allies. The cause of Napoleon was in fact rapidly declining, and while the united armies of Austria, Prussia and Russia, having crossed the Rhine and the eastern frontier of France, were driving his forces back towards Paris, the British and their Allies, invading the south, found many Frenchmen, tired of the war and the expenses of keeping up the army, ready to receive them as friends.

Affair at  
Aire.

Beresford  
enters  
Bordeaux.

Soult  
threatens  
the right  
flank of the  
Allies.

Soult, disgusted with the evident disaffection of the people on the lower Garonne, now made further efforts to force Wellington to bring Beresford from Bordeaux and thus withdraw support from the rebellion. With this view he sent off his sick and heavy baggage by Auch to Toulouse, and moved forward himself on the 13th to Viella and Conchez, threatening to turn the right flank of the Allies.

Wellington on seeing this took up a line in front of the road from Aire to Pau, the left on Aire the right on Garlin, and Marshal Soult occupied a strong position parallel to him behind the Gros Lees, in the hope that Wellington would think it essential to call up Beresford before attempting to attack or pass him.

Positions  
now  
assumed by  
Wellington  
and Soult.

In this manoeuvre he was unsuccessful; for though Wellington (who had found it easier than Soult had calculated to enter Bordeaux), on seeing that the enemy was bent on retiring to the eastward, and that the war must follow that direction, did bring up from Bordeaux the bulk of Beresford's force, he left a sufficient number of troops in the city to preserve it from any re-capture.

On the 14th, Soult, observing that the Allies in his front were collecting for an attack, and not in reality wishing to give battle, retired through Lembege and Vic Bigorre, hoping to join Suchet, and pursued by Wellington.

Soultretires  
towards  
Tarbes.

On the 19th he took up a position behind the Adour, his right at Rabastens and his left at Tarbes, and on the 20th was attacked there by the Allies, who in the affair of *Tarbes* turned his right, after which he retired through Tournay and St. Gaudens to Toulouse (his rear-guard having an engagement at the latter place with the allied cavalry in pursuit) and entered Toulouse on the 24th. Here he hoped to form a junction with Suchet.

Affair of  
Tarbes.

Soult enters  
Toulouse.

The Allies, who had to carry with them a pontoon train for the passage of the Garonne and almost all their supplies of food, did not arrive opposite Toulouse till the 27th.

Wellington  
attempts to  
pass the  
Garonne  
above  
Toulouse.

It was Wellington's wish to attack Toulouse from the south between the river Garonne and the canal, where the natural defences were weakest and where he would be in a position to *cut off Soult from a junction with Suchet*; but attempts made between the 28th and 31st to pass the river above Toulouse

Fails in this.

and advance upon the town from that direction failed, on account of the swollen state of the rivers and the nature of the country between them. Wellington therefore was forced to seek a passage for the army below the town; and he partially effected it with, some difficulty, on the 4th April, above Grenade; but did not complete it, on account of the sudden rising of the river, until the 8th or 9th. During these days the allied army was in a good deal of danger; as that portion of it which had crossed to the right bank might have been attacked by a stronger body of French while separated by the river, 127 yards wide (the bridge over which had been carried away), from all but artillery succour. Soult, however, either did not know of its position, or was disheartened by his repeated defeats, or preferred to occupy his troops in strengthening Toulouse, for he made no attack and awaited the approach of the Allies on some commanding heights covering the town on the N.E., and supported in rear by the canal and the town itself, and partially protected by the river Ers in front.

Soult's  
position.

Wellington  
attacks him  
(Battle of  
Toulouse).

On the 10th Wellington attacked him in this position, and in the *battle of Toulouse*, where the fighting of the British troops was as hard and obstinate as in any of the battles of the war, drove him from the heights into the town itself. The Allies now prepared to blockade Toulouse, but in the night of the

Soult retires  
towards  
Suchet.

12th Soult abandoned the town, retreating by Villfranche and Carcassone, towards Suchet. The following day messengers arrived at Toulouse, announcing the capture of Paris by the Allies, the deposition of Napoleon, and the conclusion of a general peace. News of peace arrives.

Soult, at first, would not acknowledge the new order of things; and Wellington, on the 17th, was preparing again to attack him, when he yielded; and a convention was agreed to on the 18th April, by Wellington and Soult, which included Suchet's force, and placed a line of demarcation between the two armies. Convention entered into between the French and Allies.

In the meantime the Allies at Bordeaux had had a successful engagement with the French in the neighbourhood of that town (4th April); and the fleet ascending the Garonne, had compelled the enemy to destroy their vessels in the river. A sortie also, made from Bayonne (14th April) upon the investing army, had been repulsed, though with great sacrifice of life. The loss sustained by the British in this sortie and the battle of Toulouse is more to be regretted, as both engagements took place after peace had been in reality made. Operations near Bordeaux and Bayonne.

Thus, when the war terminated, a few more weeks would probably have compelled the surrender of Bayonne (which was closely invested and would have been soon laid siege to); and given the Allies possession of the whole of the course of the Garonne, and the country between it and the Pyrenees.

Soon after the convention between Wellington and Soult all doubts as to the truth of the reports of peace and the downfall of Napoleon were set at rest; hostilities ceased; and the British army, having Termination of the war.



gained for itself an imperishable renown in the war, marched to Bordeaux and embarked, a portion for England and a portion to serve against America. The Spaniards and Portuguese re-crossed the Pyrenees, and the French forces were broken up and dispersed over France.

## REMARKS.

Remarks on  
the successful  
river  
passages of  
the Allies.

Before noticing the important strategical movements of this campaign, a few words may be said with reference to the very successful river passages of the Allies. Wherever Wellington attacked he gained his object; and brilliant as was the valour of the troops he led, and excellent as his direction of them was, it must strike every one that what was accomplished was beyond what the bravest and best led troops could hope under ordinary circumstances, even against a far weaker enemy, to succeed in. It does not detract from the reputation of Wellington's army to say, that Soult was at this time often outnumbered, and contending with many difficulties. Disaffection reigned in his army (which included many recruits and men accustomed to defeat), and in the country round him. Under these circumstances, although his ability as a leader was clearly shown, and at times (especially at Toulouse) his men fought very tenaciously, he did not make that stand in his fortified positions which he might have made with a strong and well-disciplined army. Wellington, on the other hand, while he employed his army ably, so as to take advantage of his superior strength, was in command of men accustomed to victory, and who had such confidence in him that he could, as he



himself said, "Go with them anywhere, and do any thing."

The invariable success attending the arms of the Allies at this time in forcing intrenched river lines and positions, is an illustration of the moral effect produced by constant defeat upon beaten armies, and by constant victories upon the conquering ones, as much as it is of military skill or daring bravery. This "moral effect" was said by Napoleon to be "as 3 to 1" in war, and the importance of trying to gain it by securing the first successes in a campaign (for attaining which preparation for war is the essential requisite) cannot be over-estimated.

It should be noticed that almost all the operations consisted of combined movements against several points, any of which could be restricted to feints or made into real attacks at will, while a serious endeavour was made to drive in the enemy at that especial point, success at which would lead to some definite strategical advantage.

In the passage of the *Nivelle*, 10th November, the object was to pierce Soult's line and then endeavour to cut him off from Bayonnæ. That portion of his line close to the right was too strong to assault, but it was hoped that he would, trusting to its strength, hold out there long enough, after his centre or left had been pierced, to give the Allies a chance of intercepting him. In this hope Wellington was, as we have seen, disappointed. Soult's retreat, and the difficulty of traversing the country, frustrated his effort.

As to the passage of the Nivelle.

It is also stated that the Allied troops in this day's battle wasted their strength too much against Soult's

left in comparison to his centre, but these details we will not enter into, our object merely being to point out the advantage sought for after the position had been carried.

Passage of  
the Nive.

The objects aimed at in the passage of the *Nive* (9th December) have been fully pointed out on page 198. The movement improved the position of the Allies in many respects, and increased Soult's difficulties.

Danger of  
Wellington  
during the  
actions  
before  
Bayonne.

Wellington, however, by this movement divided his army by an unfordable river, in front of an enemy who could act upon either bank of it (*i.e.*, by the roads from Bayonne either to St. Jean de Luz or to St. Jean Pied de Port), and thus move his whole force to attack either extremity of his opponent's line at will. There was very great danger of the Allied force on one bank of the river being overpowered before that on the other could come up to its support. Whenever an unfordable river divides a position, unless there are very many and good bridges over it, well protected from the enemy, (which was not the case in this instance), it is naturally always a serious disadvantage to the defenders, as great delay must be caused in moving troops across the river from one part of the line to the other, when there are insufficient facilities of passage—for instance, when there is only a single bridge.

Soult, as we have seen, was not slow in endeavouring to profit by his position before the Allies could gain time to bridge the river at many places; and in the *Battles around Bayonne* (from 10th to 13th December) did his utmost by throwing himself first upon one side

of the river, and then upon the other, to overpower Wellington. The fighting qualities of the French were not, however, equal to the task, and they failed. Still, such able critics as Sir William Napier consider that Wellington in these operations despised his enemy and risked his own troops rather beyond measure, and that if in one of the battles, the opportunities they clearly possessed had been properly seized by the French, it must have gone hard with the Allies. The serious way in which the Allies were pressed in these actions, fully illustrates the advantage possessed by a general who, like Soult, holds "interior lines" with regard to his opponent; and the disadvantage of such a position as that occupied by Wellington.

Weighed comparatively with the inconvenience and loss it enabled him to inflict upon Soult, he probably considered that the danger, especially under the circumstances of the moral superiority of his army, was justifiably incurred; and on this, as on many other similarly hazardous occasions, he succeeded in saving his army from any disaster.

When Wellington, on the 14th February, commenced the campaign of 1814, by passing the Bidouze and Gave de Mauleon, so as to draw Soult from Bayonne, and enable him to throw a bridge over the Adour, and invest that place, he did so, because he dare not advance towards Bordeaux, with Soult at Bayonne threatening his line of supplies. Bayonne, like St. Sebastian or Pampeluna, had to be taken or closely invested, before he dare pass it; but we should notice that we now (in the operations of the next few days) find him blockading and *passing by*

Discussion  
of Wellington's objects  
and intentions in the  
opening operations  
of 1814.

places such as St. Jean Pied de Port, Navarreins and Peyrehorade, instead of waiting till they fell to do so. His numbers now enabled him to do this. The movements during this part of the campaign form good illustrations of strategy. The main object aimed at by Wellington was to throw the bridge, to which end, his operations against the left contributed. If these latter failed, however, and yet the bridge were successfully thrown, it is stated to have been his design to make every effort to march back rapidly, cross at the bridge before Soult could prevent him, turn the latter's right, and seize his depôts at Port de Lanne and Dax. Such a line of operations, however, although it would have accomplished much, would have left Soult an open line of retreat towards Suchet; also the country on the N. of Bayonne with its sandy waste, was not favourable for military operations. Thus it was not one to be unnecessarily adopted.

The real object of Wellington (viz., to throw the bridge below Bayonne) was never fathomed, as we have seen, by Soult. The latter imagined that he either meant to attack the intrenched camp around Bayonne, or to pass the Adour higher up and attack Port de Lanne, or perhaps to attack the fortified bridge at Hastings, or endeavour to cut him off from Pau. Being beaten back by Wellington he took up a central position at Orthez, watching the development of events. Wellington,—successful both at Bayonne, and against the left on the rivers Bidouze and Gave de Mauleon,—naturally pressed Soult at Orthez, and rather unaccountably, Soult at this point allowed the Allies to gain a great advantage.

"Soult," says Napier, "should not have accepted battle at Orthez"; and, indeed, it can hardly be understood why he did so, or why, if he meant to fight, he did not oppose the passage of the Allies over the Gave de Pau before the battle, but some mistake in carrying out orders is given as the cause of the latter circumstance.

After Wellington in the battle of Orthez had cut his adversary off from Pau, Dax, and Peyrehorade, forced him to retire through St. Sever, and very nearly surrounded and cut him off altogether, Soult is considered to have given evidence of great strategical skill in marching suddenly up the right bank of the Adour towards Plaisance and afterwards retreating by Tarbes and the foot of the Pyrenees. He, in fact, changed his line of communication from Bordeaux to Toulouse. By this move he did the utmost in his power to draw Wellington away from Bordeaux, and while he saved his own army from the possibility of being driven north-west (into the barren sandy country by the coast), drew the war back in the direction of the Pyrenees, where he knew he would find positions in which to retard the enemy, and from whence he might still join Suchet.

His position on the 8th March, between Plaisance and Maubourguet, with an advanced guard at Lembege, covered the roads to either Auch or Pau.

His apparently offensive movement threatening to turn the right flank of the Allies on the 13th, was a good effort to aid Bordeaux; and though he failed, yet in spite of difficulties as to provisions, (for he

Soult's reasons for accepting battle at Orthez difficult to understand.

Skill Soult displayed in changing his line of retreat from Bordeaux towards Toulouse.

His position on 8th March covered important roads.

His threatening the right flank of the Allies and conduct of the fur-



ther retreat, was cut off from his magazines,) he kept his army together, drawing Wellington after him along the foot of the Pyrenees, and reached Toulouse in safety, making a stand at Tarbes on the way.

His position  
at Toulouse  
a good  
strategical  
one.

At Toulouse he had a strong position, and the town was not only an important one to defend, but was strategically well situated, covering the junction of several roads, and forming one of the principal passages over the Garonne. From it he had it in his power either to retreat by Villefranche and Carcassonne and join Suchet; or up the right bank of the Garonne, drawing Wellington after him in that direction; or north-eastward towards Lyons. He was driven, as we have seen, in consequence of the result of the battle, to adopt the first line of retreat towards Suchet.

Conduct of  
Suchet.

As Suchet has been so often mentioned in this campaign as a possible support for Soult, but never united with him, it is necessary to explain that he persistently refused to do so, and that his conduct in this has been very strongly condemned. Soult, from the first week in February, had been constantly urging him to join him, and constantly hoping that he would do so, but in vain; and on the night of the 10th April, after the battle of Toulouse, he made a last appeal to him by letter telling him of his situation. "March," he said, "with the whole of your forces on Carcassonne, I will meet you there with my army; we can then retake the initiative, transfer the seat of war to the Upper Garonne, and compel the enemy to recall his troops from Bordeaux." But Suchet would not move, and still earlier than this (before the battle of Orthez), when he could have joined Soult easily,



having no orders to the contrary from the Emperor, he gave a wrong return of his strength, and declined. Indifference, jealousy of Soult, and failing zeal for Napoleon (for he was one of the first after his downfall to join the Bourbons), were probably the causes of his refusal, and his conduct greatly aided the efforts of the Allies.

The following eloquent eulogy upon Soult, especially with regard to his operations in this campaign, is passed by Napier:—"Vast combinations, inex-  
 "haustible personal resources, a clear judgment,  
 "unshaken firmness and patience under difficulties,  
 "unwavering fidelity to his Sovereign and his  
 "country, are what no man can justly deny him.  
 "In this celebrated campaign of nine months,  
 "although counteracted by the treacherous hostility  
 "of many of his countrymen, he repaired and  
 "enlarged the works of five strong places, and in-  
 "trenched five great camps with such works as  
 "Marius himself would not have disdained; once  
 "he changed his line of operations, and either  
 "attacking or defending delivered 24 battles and  
 "combats. Defeated in all, he fought the last as  
 "fiercely as the first; remaining unconquered in  
 "mind, and still intent upon renewing the struggle,  
 "when peace came to put a stop to his prodigious  
 "efforts. These efforts were fruitless, because  
 "Suchet renounced him: because the people of the  
 "south were apathetic, and fortune was adverse;  
 "because he was opposed to one of the greatest  
 "generals of the world at the head of unconquerable  
 "troops."

Remarks of  
 Napier as  
 to Soult.

Results of  
this cam-  
paign and  
of the war.

The triumphs of this campaign formed a fitting close to the operations of so great a war, including, as they did, the successful passage of many disputed rivers, two great victorious battles and several engagements, the capture of two principal cities, and the blockade of many smaller ones. After long years of patient struggling the Allied arms—owing to the skill of Wellington and his generals, and the bravery of his soldiers—had conquered. The Peninsula was free; the power of Napoleon, for the time at all events, broken; and the renown of the British army established in Europe.

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We have attempted in the above pages to point out why that army which gained in this war so much fame, fought the battles, and made the movements, and conducted the retreats which it did. It was placed in a position to win success, because an able head directed it; but it won finally because its leader never allowed it to lose in battle what he had gained for it by strategy, and because the subordinate officers, and soldiers, fought his plans through.

The scope of these lectures has not permitted us to discuss the battles of Wellington, but we cannot too strongly advise a close study in standard works of the way in which he placed and handled his troops in them.\*

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\* At Sandhurst the above lectures were followed by others in consideration of selected battles of Wellington, Napoleon, and Lee, as illustrating the subject of "Tactics."

## CONCLUSION.

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IN the introduction to these Lectures it is mentioned that they aim at the following three objects, stated briefly:—

- 1st. To give an outline of the chief British operations of the Peninsula War.
- 2nd. To give reasons for every step taken, examining their value, and to draw attention to the influence which the character of the country exercised on the campaigns.
- 3rd. To explain and illustrate from the campaigns some of the technical terms and chief maxims of the art of war.

In connexion with these objects, a few pages are now added in conclusion.

With regard to the 1st, it may be convenient for future reference to give here a short summary of the events of the various years of the war.

1807. December.—French army, under Junot, takes possession of Portugal.

1808. 1st August.—Landing of Sir A. Wellesley in Portugal.

17th August.—Battle of *Rolica*.

21st August.—Battle of *Vimiero*.

30th August.—Convention of Cintra.

Result: The expulsion of Junot from Portugal, and the possession of that kingdom with its harbours, fortresses and strong frontier towards Spain.

1808. 26th October.—A British army under Sir John Moore and Sir David Baird, advances from Lisbon and Corunna to aid the Spaniards. Is surrounded by Napoleon's forces, and obliged to retreat towards Corunna.

1809. 16th January.—Battle of *Corunna*.

Result: The turning Napoleon from the invasion of Portugal and Andalusia.

29th March.—Soult having invaded Portugal takes Oporto.

5th May.—Sir Arthur Wellesley advances from Coimbra against Soult, who had invaded Portugal from the north.

12th May.—Passage of the *Duero*.

Result: The expulsion of Soult from Portugal; the overthrow of his army, and the re-capture of Oporto.

20th July.—Sir A. Wellesley uniting with a Spanish army under Cuesta, advances towards Madrid.

27th and 28th July.—Battle of *Talavera*.

Result: Of comparatively little value to the French or English, except that the French evacuated Galicia.

1810. In the spring of this year the French over-run Andalusia, and various provinces of Spain, and besiege Cadiz.

June.—Massena moves forward; takes Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo, and invades Portugal; and Wellington, retiring before him towards the Lines of Torres Vedras, draws up in position at Busaco.

7th September.—Battle of *Busaco*.

Remainder of this year Massena remains in front of the "Lines," and his army falls into great distress.

Result: The failure of the French to drive Sir Arthur Wellesley out of Portugal, and the loss by the Allies of the fortresses of Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo.

1811. 5th March.—Retreat of Massena commences, and Battle of *Barossa*, fought near Cadiz.

10th March.—Soult moving from Andalusia to aid Massena takes Badajoz (French siege). Turns back again towards Cadiz upon hear- of the battle of Barossa.

22nd April.—In his absence Beresford endeavours to re-take Badajoz.

2nd May.—Massena, after retreating out of Portugal, returns to attack Wellington near Almeida.

3rd and 5th of May.—Battle of *Fuentes d' Onoro*.

10th May.—Wellington regains Almeida.

16th May.—Soult having compelled Beresford to raise the siege of Badajoz (1st English siege) attacks him.

Battle of *Albuera*.

27th May.—Wellington, joining Beresford, renews the siege of Badajoz—but Soult forces him again to raise the siege (2nd English siege).

Result: The expulsion of Masséna from Portugal. The re-capture of Almeida from the French. The defeat of the French armies in various battles, and the *loss* by the Allies of Badajoz.

1812. 19th January.—Wellington re-takes *Ciudad-Rodrigo*.

7th April.—Re-takes *Badajoz* (3rd English siege).

10th May.—Surprises *Almaraz*.

13th June.—Advances into Spain against Marmont.

26th June.—Takes the forts of Salamanca.

22nd July.—Battle of *Salamanca*.

12th August.—Wellington pursuing Joseph, enters Madrid.

26th August.—Soult raises the siege of Cadiz, and evacuates Andalusia.

19th September.—Wellington lays siege to Burgos—fails, and returns again to Portugal.

Result: The capture of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz, the works at Almaraz, and the



forts at Salamanca; the defeat of Marmont in the battle of Salamanca; the expulsion of Joseph from Madrid and the delivery of Cadiz and all Andalusia.

1813. May.—Wellington again advances into Spain. Turns the French positions behind the Duero and the Ebro, and

21st June.—Defeats Joseph in the great battle of *Vitoria*, driving him back to the Pyrenees, and then lays siege (29th June) to *St. Sebastian*, and also blockades Pampeluna.

25th to 31st July.—Soult endeavouring to relieve Pampeluna and *St. Sebastian*, fights the battles of the *Pyrenees*.

31st August.—Capture of *St. Sebastian*.

7th October.—Wellington passes the river Bidassoa, forming the boundary between Spain and France.

31st October.—Pampeluna surrenders.

10th November.—Wellington advances into France. Forces the passage of the *Nivelle*.

9th December.—Forces the passage of the *Nive* and closes upon Bayonne.

10th to 13th December.—Soult attacks the Allies and fights the actions before Bayonne, and both armies then go into cantonments.

Result: The rout of Joseph's army; the almost complete expulsion of the French from Spain. The establishment of a new "Base," on the northern coast. The capture of *St. Sebastian* and Pampeluna, the successful invasion of French territory, and repeated defeats of Soult.

1814. 14th February.—Wellington drives Soult over the Bidouze and Gave de Mauleon.

22nd February.—Soult retreating behind the Gave de Pau, takes up a position at Orthez.

23rd to 26th February. — Passage of the Adour by Wellington, and investment of Bayonne.

27th February.—Battle of *Orthez*.

2nd March.—Affair at Aire.

12th March.—Beresford enters Bordeaux.

20th March.—Affair at Tarbes. Soult retires to Toulouse.

10th April.—Battle of *Toulouse*.

14th April.—Sortie from Bayonne. Conclusion of the war.

Result: The successful passage of the great river Adour; the defeat of Soult in two battles and several actions; the capture of the cities of Bordeaux and Toulouse, and the expulsion of Napoleon's armies from a large portion of the French territory.

The above tabular summary of the events of the various years of the war explains the occasion on which all the battles and sieges which are borne on the colours of English regiments for the Peninsula and the south of France were fought.

These are marked *in Italics* above, and are :—

Rolica.	Busaco.
Vimiero.	Barossa.
Corunna.	Fuentes d'Onoro.
Duero.	Albuera.
Talavera.	Ciudad-Rodrigo.

Badajoz.	San Sebastian.
Almaraz.	Nivelle.
Salamanca.	Nive.
Vitoria.	Orthez.
Pyrenees.	Toulouse.

The word "*Peninsula*" is also inscribed in order to include all the less important affairs (of which there were very many) not put down above, and the following three names are borne exceptionally by different regiments :—

*Sahagun*—by the 15th Hussars for a gallant cavalry combat, on the 21st December, 1808, during Sir John Moore's campaign.

*Arroya dos Mollinos*—by the 34th Regiment, for a surprise by Lord Hill on 28th October, 1811, of a detachment of Soult's army, undertaken to divert the French attention from Wellington in the North.

*Tarifa*—by the 47th and 87th Regiments, for the repulse of a French attempt to take the castle of Tarifa in December, 1811.

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With regard to the 2nd object of the Lectures, the following synopsis of them drawing attention to the chief points discussed in each Lecture—and especially in the "Remarks"—may be of use :—

#### LECTURE I.

Origin of the war, and manner in which Portugal and Spain were quietly occupied by the French. Military strength at the opening of the war of England, Spain, Portugal and France, and position of the French in the Peninsula. Topography of the Penin-

sula, especially the character of the mountain chains, roads and rivers, and the positions of the harbours and fortresses.

Reasons for the selection of Lisbon and Cadiz as the best starting points for the British army ; strength of the Portuguese frontier should be especially noted ; also the advantage of operating from the west coast. Nature of the topographical difficulties which Napoleon, by treacherously occupying Spain and Portugal, had overcome.

Disadvantages his troops laboured under—the direction of the mountain chains to be particularly noticed.

Advantages and disadvantages which the British laboured under.

## LECTURE II.

Reasons for the whole army being eventually directed towards Lisbon.

Reasons for landing at Figueras.

Reasons why the French gave battle at Rolica.

Reasons why Sir A. Wellesley in advancing after the battle kept to the sea-coast.

Plan of campaign of Sir A. Wellesley. Reasons why it would probably have succeeded ; in what its risk consisted, and why it was abandoned.

Operations proposed by him after the battle of Vimiero. Reason why they were not carried out.

Reasons for which Junot after Vimiero desired to negotiate for terms. Nature of the terms agreed upon.

Reason of the Convention of Cintra being advantageous to the British.

Reason of the importance of the defile of Torres Vedras.

General plan of campaign given to Moore.

Reason why he did not join Baird by sea.

Position of affairs early in October when he set out from Lisbon, and changes which had taken place in the Peninsula, more especially in the situation of the French and Spanish armies.

### LECTURE III.

Reason for Moore's separating his artillery and cavalry from his main body.

Reasons for his delay in marching, and of the length of the various columns.

Position of the British and French armies on the 26th and 28th November, and reasons of the British position being dangerous.

Reason of Hope's position, 28th November, being a critical one.

Reason why Moore was not responsible for the situation of the British Army.

Reason why Moore counter-ordered Baird's intended retreat.

Reason why Moore, before threatening the French line of communication, established magazines at Benevente and other places.

Advantage he gained by this.

Chief reason why he determined to move forward against Soult.

Important result of this movement.

Reason why Napoleon when marching from Madrid took the road towards Tordesillas and Benevente.

Manner in which the nature of the ground favoured the retreat of Moore through Galicia, and why it did not allow him to make a permanent stand there.

## LECTURE IV.

Position of Allies and French on 22nd April, 1809, when Sir A. Wellesley landed for the second time in Portugal.

French plan for invading Portugal.

Reasons for its comparative failure.

Reason why Sir A. Wellesley determined to advance against Soult in preference to Victor.

His plan of campaign, and object of detaching Beresford.

Reasons why, upon reconnoitring Soult's position, he determined to attempt the passage of the Duero.

Reasons why this method of passing the river was skilful as well as daring.

Reason why Soult after he had commenced his retreat from Oporto was in a most critical position.

Reason why Murray is censured by military writers.

Reasons why Sir A. Wellesley delayed at Oporto.

Reasons why Beresford's operations are censured.

Reason of the importance of the points of Amarante, Salamonde and Montalegre, and of Loison having been wrong in abandoning Amarante.

Influence of the nature of the country upon the results of this campaign.

Reason why after his success against Soult, Sir A. Wellesley was obliged to return at once towards Abrantes.

## LECTURE V.

Position of Allies and French at end of June, 1809, at opening of campaign of Talavera.

Principal considerations which influenced Sir A.



Wellesley in his plan of campaign, other plans open to him, and objections to these.

Nature of his plan, and chief object of it.

Reason why he advanced without magazines.

Reason why on approaching Victor behind the Alberche he did not at once attack him, and why Victor immediately afterwards retired.

Reasons why the British, after the victory of Talavera, did not pursue the French. Illustrations of the bad faith of the Spaniards.

Reason why Sir A. Wellesley was now obliged to turn back towards Placencia.

Explanation of Soult's having concentrated so large an army in rear of the Allies.

Reason why on 3rd August it became necessary for Sir A. Wellesley to retreat without delay.

Reasons for his commencing the "Lines of Torres Vedras."

Reasons why Sir A. Wellesley could hardly have foreseen the events of this campaign, and why it is probable that his plans, except for unlooked-for circumstances, would have succeeded.

Reasons why Joseph is censured for attacking the Allies at Talavera.

Causes which contributed to mar the results of this campaign for both sides.

Great influence upon the operations of the campaign exercised by the topography of the country.

## LECTURE VI.

Changes in the situation of affairs between the end of the Talavera campaign and June, 1810.

Position of the French and Allies in June, 1810.

Reasons for the arrangements made by Wellington. Different lines by which the French could invade Portugal.

French plan of campaign.

Discussion of the line of invasion which the French adopted, and its comparative advantages and disadvantages both before and after the capture of Ciudad-Rodrigo and Almeida, with regard to other possible lines.

Reason why the position of a portion of the Light Division under Crawford became critical.

Movements of Massena between 15th and 26th Sept.

In what respects are these criticised, and why were his positions on the 16th September well selected.

Reason why Wellington offered battle at Busaco; why Massena was enabled to secure the Boyalva pass the day after the battle, and why he did not do so earlier.

Consideration of Wellington's position, especially with regard to the roads leading towards the position.

Reason for his falling back after the battle.

Reason why, if Massena had failed in securing this pass, he would have been in a most disadvantageous position.

Reason why Wellington made the arrangements he did with regard to this pass, and in what respect they have been challenged.

Operations of Massena from 28th September up to his arrival before the "Lines of Torres Vedras."

Description of these lines and their peculiar advantages.

Position occupied by the Allies and French at the close of 1810.

Reason why Soult's army did not co-operate more actively with Massena.

Manner in which Hill co-operated in the campaign.

## LECTURE VII.

Reason why Napoleon refused to aid Massena further than by ordering Soult to support him actively.

Reason why Soult, after the capture of Badajoz, returned suddenly towards Cadiz.

Reason why Massena had been enabled to subsist his army as long as he did in front of the lines ; and why at last he was compelled to retreat.

Reason why, when beginning the retreat, one division remained behind at Punhete.

Movements of Massena, in retreat, from 5th March up to his arrival at Salamanca early in April, and Wellington's movements in pursuit; the manner in which Ney endeavoured to make the most of the ground in retarding Wellington to be noticed.

Lines of retreat that were open to Massena.

Discussion of their comparative advantages, &c.

Reason why Wellington during the pursuit detached a force towards Badajoz.

Reason why Ney should have held his position obstinately at Condeixa (for failing in which he was superseded by Massena), and causes assigned for his not having done so.

Reason why Condeixa was an important point, and why it was especially an object to destroy the bridge at Qimbra.

Plan of operations which Massena had intended to adopt after reaching Guarda on the 21st March.

Advantages which would have attended this plan, and reason why it was abandoned.

Movements of Soult during this campaign, and of Beresford after being detached by Wellington towards Badajoz on 15th March; also of Wellington and Marmont from the time when the former set off from Almeida (April 9th) to join Beresford up to the close of the campaign—accounting for the French siege of Badajoz; the battle of Barossa; 1st English siege of Badajoz; battle of Fuentes d'Onoro; battle of Albuera; 2nd English siege of Badajoz; and reasons for the failure and abandonment of the above two sieges of Badajoz by the Allies.

Situation of the Allies and French towards the close of 1811.

## LECTURE VIII.

Reasons for the *dispersion* of the French armies at the opening of this campaign of 1812, and their positions; also the Allied position.

Nature of the advantages which Wellington now possessed over the French.

Reasons why, before commencing operations, it was necessary for him to take Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz, and not only one of these fortresses but *both* of them. Stratagems Wellington resorted to in order to conceal his design of besieging each of these fortresses, and manner in which the French were deceived.

Reasons why it was necessary for him to take them as quickly as possible by assault, and why the relieving French forces in each case failed to save them, and retired.

Position of Allied and French armies in May, 1812.

Reason why Wellington now determined to operate against Marmont in preference to Joseph or Soult.

Reason for the attempt to surprise Almaraz; stratagems resorted to and advantages gained by it.

Advantage of repairing the bridge at Alcantara.

Reasons for which sieges may often become necessary in war.

### LECTURE IX.

Position of Marmont and Wellington on the Duero on 8th July, 1812.

Reasons why Wellington and Marmont remained facing each other from the 8th to 16th July.

Reason why Marmont assumed the offensive.

General objects of Marmont and Wellington throughout the movements from the 15th to 22nd July, and the operations of strategy which these illustrate.

Apparent object of Marmont's march towards Toro on 16th.

Real object of it.

Reason why Wellington only brought his right wing as far as the Trabancos on the 16th.

Reason why he retired it to the Guarena on the 17th.

Reason why, on the 19th, he was under no apprehension as to Marmont's turning his right.

Object of Marmont's march up the Guarena on the 20th.

Object of Wellington's march towards Cantalpino.

Nature of the advantages which Marmont had gained on the evening of the 20th, and reason why

an army fighting in a position completely covering its line of supplies is less likely than in any other position to be irretrievably ruined by defeat.

Reasons why Wellington had resolved on the 21st to retreat into Portugal.

Reason of Marmont's movement on the 22nd, and error made by him.

Important result which the evacuation of the fort at Alba by the Spaniards had on the result of the battle of Salamanca.

Reasons why Marmont, though evidently exposing his own line of communications through Valladolid to Wellington, ran no serious danger in doing so.

Reasons why Burgos was besieged.

Comparative advantages and disadvantages of the French and English systems of obtaining supplies in the Peninsula.

Reason why the situation of the French armies in the Peninsula proves, instead of disproves, the necessity of having some line of supplies, and consequently of guarding it.

## LECTURE X.

Position of the Allies and French at the opening of the campaign of 1813.

Reasons why the Allies at the opening of the campaign stood in a better relative situation with regard to the enemy than they had done in previous years.

Plan of campaign formed by Wellington.

Reasons for adopting it in preference to others.

Reasons for Joseph not making his intended stand near Burgos.



Reasons why Wellington determined to turn the line of the Ebro.

Important strategical advantage he gained by this movement.

Main object sought for in the attack upon Joseph at Vitoria.

Manner in which Joseph might more effectually have retarded the success of the Allies in this campaign.

Reasons why San Sebastian was besieged.

Reasons why Pampeluna was invested and not besieged.

Reasons for which Soult fought the battles of the Pyrenees, and the design of his mode of attack.

Reasons for which Wellington determined to pass the Bidassoa.

Reasons for which both armies after the passage of this river remained inactive for a month.

## LECTURE XI.

Topography of the S. W. portion of France.

Defensive lines of France N. of the Pyrenees.

Reason why Wellington attacked the left of Soult's line behind the Nivelle, and object aimed at in the battle. Reason why this object was not entirely gained.

Position assumed by the Allies and French after the passage of the Nivelle.

Reason why Wellington determined to pass the Niye. Position he assumed after the passage.

Danger of this position.

Line taken up by Soult after the failure of his

attacks in the actions before Bayonne, and corresponding change of position made by Wellington.

Reason why Wellington, at the opening of the campaign of 1814, determined to attempt to force Soult's left, driving him back over the Bidouze and Gave de Mauleon.

Operations of the Allied centre and left during this movement.

Plan which Wellington had intended to follow had he failed in these operations. Discussion of it, and reason why Wellington would not have wished unnecessarily to have adopted it.

Reason why it was necessary for Wellington to blockade or take Bayonne.

Reason why, if a bridge were thrown over the Adour, it was necessary to throw it below Bayonne.

Discussion as to whether Soult should have given battle or not at Orthez.

Objects sought for by the Allies in the battle of Orthez.

Reason why Beresford was detached after Orthez, and success of his movement.

Direction taken by Soult after Orthez.

Object of his march, and reason for its being considered a skilful one.

Object of his threatening to turn the Allied right on the 13th March, and of his taking up a strong position behind the Gros Lees.

Operations of Wellington during his pursuit of Soult.

Roads covered by Soult's position on 8th March.

Reason for the delay in the arrival of the Allies before Toulouse.

Reason for Toulouse being a place of strategical importance.

Reason for Wellington's attempts to attack it from the South, and for his being obliged to give them up.

Lines of retreat open to Soult from Toulouse before and after the battle.

Probable reasons why Suchet made no efforts to give assistance to Soult in this campaign.

With regard to the 3rd object of the Lectures, the following technical terms have been simply defined :—

"Strategy."

"Tactics."

"Theatre of war."

"Base."

"Line of communication."

"Line of operation."

"Topography."

"Water-shed."

"Objective point."

"Strategical points."

"Important strategical points."

"Decisive strategical points."

"Tactical points."

"Important tactical points."

"Decisive tactical points."

"Single line of operations."

"Double (or treble) line of operations."

"Point of concentration."

"Interior lines."—Lecture III.

} Introduction.

} Lecture I.

} Lecture II.

In the various campaigns are found illustrations of

several of the above technical terms, such as "Operations by double" and "single lines," "strategical points," and so on; and also of the chief rules or maxims of the art of war. Most of these rules have been discussed in the Remarks upon the Lectures, but in order to impress these remarks more strongly and strengthen them by the weight of authority, we quote the following extracts (marked N.) from the "Maximes de Guerre de Napoleon," and point out the illustrations of their truth occurring in the campaigns:—

"When, in order to conquer a country, one marches with two or three armies (each having its separate line of operation) towards a fixed point where these armies are to unite, it is a principle that the junction of these different armies must never take place near the enemy, because not only can the enemy by concentrating his forces hinder their junction, but he may also beat them each separately."—N.

Ex.: Sir John Moore fixed upon Salamanca, a point near the enemy, at which to concentrate with Baird, and got into the most dangerous situation, in which each portion of the allied army *was* exposed to be beaten separately.

"To operate from directions wide apart and between which there is no direct communication is a fault which generally leads to others. It is a principle that an army should always keep its columns united, so that the enemy cannot thrust himself between them.

"When from *particular reasons* one must depart

from this rule, the separated corps should be able to support themselves in their operations, and be as little exposed as possible to be attacked while isolated."—N.

The principle involved in the above maxim is, that "Double or Treble lines" are, as a rule, objectionable, but that it *may* however be necessary from circumstances (or even advantageous) to operate in this way; that then, however, each corps must be rendered "Independent" and be as little as possible exposed to attack.

Ex. of the failure of Double lines: Allies operated in this way in the campaign of Corunna, and failed.

Allies and French operated in this way in the campaign of Talavera, and both failed. The French in the campaign of 1810, and failed (for Soult was intended to co-operate with Massena but did not do so);

and Napier remarks that "*history generally* proves that operations of this nature usually do fail."

Ex. of violation of the rule, laying down that each column *if* separated, must at all events be rendered strong and independent.—Sir J. Moore's column moving from Lisbon was without artillery, cavalry, or ammunition. The danger it incurred has been pointed out.

Ex. of *success* attending an operation by a "Double line."

Sir A. Wellesley's advance from Coimbra against Soult, detaching Beresford.

Wellington's success in turning the Line of the

Duero in 1813. It should be noticed that, in the latter case especially, every possible preparation for moving rapidly was made beforehand.

This careful preparation has specially marked similar successful movements of the Germans also during 1866 and 1870.

"It is a well-approved maxim of war never to do what the enemy wishes. One ought therefore to avoid the field of battle which he has studied, and as a consequence never attack in front a position which can be gained by turning."—N.

Ex.: Wellington, in 1813, does not attack the strong French positions behind the Duero or the Ebro in front, as he was expected to do, but *turned* both of them—thus gaining his object by strategy, without loss to his army.

If Massena had turned the Allied position at Busaco on the 7th Sept. instead of the 8th, he might have avoided the loss of men he suffered in the battle of Busaco.

"Nothing is more important in war than 'Unity of Command.'"—N.

Ex. of the truth of this:—The constant failures of the French operations in the various campaigns on account of the comparative independence of the Marshals—special examples also in the campaign of Talavera, 1809, and in that of 1810 and 1814.

"The most important secret in war is to make oneself master of the 'communications.'"—N.

"According to the laws of war, every general who



loses his line of communications is worthy of death. I mean by line of communication that on which are the hospitals, means of succour for the sick, munitions of war, and provisions."—N.

Exâmples proving the importance great commanders have attached to this precept.

Napoleon's march from Madrid, and recalling his troops from their advance towards Portugal and the South of Spain evacuating Andalusia, when Sir J. Moore threatened his line of communications; and Sir J. Moore retiring at once when he heard of this march. Wellington manœuvring from the 15th to 22nd July, 1812, in order to guard his communications with Ciudad-Rodrigo; his retiring across the Tagus in the Talavera campaign when Soult had gained Naval Moral.

Ex. of ruin sustained by commanders who have lost their line of communication.

Destruction of Soult's army in the campaign of the Duero.

Destruction of Joseph's by driving it off the Bayonne road in the campaign of 1813.

"One does not mean by 'losing' the line of communications, the line being disturbed by partisans or insurgent peasants, who are not in a position to face an advanced or rear guard."—N.

Ex.: The line of communication of the French armies in Spain, was not lost in the dangerous sense of the term, because the French were surrounded by Guerillas and half-organised Spanish bands; had they been surrounded by disciplined armies their

situation would have been different (*see* Remarks, p. 171).

“One ought never to yield up one’s line of communication, but to know how to change it is one of the most skilful manœuvres of the Art of War.”—N.

Ex. : Change of line of communication by Sir John Moore in 1809 from Portugal to Corunna.

Change of line of communication by Wellington in 1813 from Portugal to St. Ander on the N. coast of Spain.

Change of line of communication by Soult from Bordeaux to Toulouse in 1814.